A

REVIEW

OF THE

CHARACTERS

OF THE

PRINCIPAL NATIONS

IN

EUROPE.

A

REVIEW

OF THE

CHARACTERS

OF THE

PRINCIPAL NATIONS

IN

EUROPE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

DUBLIN:

Printed for P. and W. WILSON, J. POTTS,
J. WILLIAMS, W. COLLES, and T. WALKER.

M.DCC.LXX.

BRITISH MUSEUM
30 SEP 73

OF THE

ENGLISH.

To the Honourable G. R.

IN Compliance with your requeſt I now proceed to attempt a Delineation of the various Characters of the moſt celebrated among the modern Nations.

A DETAIL of their Cuſtoms and Manners is not here propoſed. The principal Intent of this Performance is to animadvert on thoſe Peculiarities whereon the Diſparity between them is ſtrikingly founded, and which, like Features in the human Countenance, render them all conſpicuouſly different from each other.

IN order, at the ſame time, to trace the Cauſes of their good or bad Qualities, of the Vigour and Growth, or Weakneſs and Decline of their Spirit and Abilities, the political Revolutions they have undergone will come occaſionally under Conſideration; and no proper

Opportunity be omitted of having Recourſe to the Aſſiſtance of thoſe hiſtorical Paſſages that may ſerve to throw a further Light upon the Subject: As the Influence of public Events over the Minds of Men is powerful in all Countries, and often viſibly proves the Source from whence the Temper and Diſpoſition of a People originally flow.

In a Review of this Kind it is natural to begin at Home. But leſt too flattering a Deſcription of our Countrymen ſhould be the Conſequence of appealing ſolely to the Verdict of Engliſh Writers, the Opinions of Foreigners will alſo be duly conſulted, and our national Merits be referred, in a great Meaſure to their Deciſion; correcting only the Miſtakes and Inaccuracies to which they were liable from Inadvertence, or from an imperfect Inveſtigation of ſome Occurrences.

Foreigners are not, in general, prepoſſeſſed in our favour; tho' from Views of Self-intereſt they may frequently diſguiſe their Sentiments to the Engliſh abroad, or expreſs a good Opinion of us when inclined from the ſame Motives, to ſettle in England.

The Diffuſion of the French, our natural Enemies, over the Face of all Europe, operates unfavourably for us in more Inſtances than we are perhaps well aware of. As they carry with them wherever they go, a deep rooted Attachment to their Country (which even the worſt uſage Subjects can receive from Government is not able to eradicate) they loſe no Opportunities of ſounding forth its Praiſes; and of enforcing, with all that

that Energy and Heart-felt pleaſure Conviction inſpires, its Grandeur and ſuperior Excellence to any other Part of the World whatever. This is a Fact ſo univerſally known and admitted that it were needleſs to inlarge upon it.

But it is particularly over the Engliſh they labour to eſtabliſh an Opinion of their Pre-eminence. The Engliſh have long been their avowed Rivals; conſequently as to depreſs us is in ſome Meaſure to exalt themſelves, they are always ready to draw diſagreeable Pictures of this Nation; and whether through Envy, or the natural Propenſity of Mankind to liſten to Defamation, their Reports, however injurious, are but too implicitly received.

Happily for us, however, there are others who have inquired into the Merits of the Cauſe, by reſiding among us, or inſpecting with an unbiaſſed and enlightened Attention, the different Accounts publiſhed of this Country, and of its Inhabitants. From the combined Speculations of theſe Friends, Foes, and neutral Spectators, a Draught of our Character may be formed that will be found, it is hoped, tolerably conſiſtent with Truth.

There is no ſtronger Proof of the Inconſtancy and Mutability of all human Things, than the prodigious Change effected in the Courſe of the two laſt Centuries in the Minds, Manners, and political Conſtitution of the People of this Iſland. During the Reigns of the Plantagenets and the Tudors, our Liberty had made but a ſlow Progreſs. The Want of intellectual

Improvements retarded all others. Our Government, in moſt Inſtances, was abſolutely tyrannical; and we were buried in the profoundeſt Superſtition. Who can forget the Iron Days of William the Conqueror? who not content to rule us with the moſt unbounded Deſpotiſm, in whatever related to the public Adminiſtration of Things, extended the Exertion of his Will and Pleaſure into the moſt ſecret Receſſes of Family Occurrences; regiſtering every Man's Poſſeſſions, in order to diſpoſe of them for his own Uſe, whenever he thought proper, without deigning to conſult the Owner; preſcribing even the Hours of Reſt and Labour, and ſubjecting every Engliſhman, from the higheſt to the loweſt throughout the Kingdom, to the utmoſt Severity of this oppreſſive Regulation. Thus the whole Realm became as it were, a Camp or Garriſon, where no Man durſt ſtir out of his Quarters till the ſtated Hours of Permiſſion to riſe and enjoy the Day; and when their Signal of Retreat was regularly given by the Sound of a Bell, warning People to extinguiſh their domeſtic Fires. A Cuſtom, of which ſome Traces ſtill ſubſiſted even ſo lately as the Beginning of Charles the firſt's Reign, as appears from Milton's Alluſion to it in his *Penſeroſo*. Who can forget the ſervile Tribute ſo long paid to the papal See; and the more infamous Homage it received from one of our Kings, who acknowledged the Pope to be his Sovereign, and ſubmitted himſelf and his Dominions to his temporal, as well as to his ſpiritual Authority? Theſe equally dreadful and humiliating Paſſages cannot be too frequently recalled. They ſerve to renew, in the Words of Tacitus, the *Memoriam priſtinae Serviutis*, the Remembrance of a Slavery ſuch as no other

European

European Nation ever experienced; and conſequently to render us the more grateful on the Reflection *praeſentium Bonorum*, of the happy Diſparity of our preſent Circumſtances.

Such Anecdotes, however, need create no Wonder, when we recollect that in thoſe Days the Ignorance of our Fore-fathers was ſuch, that the now ordinary and vulgar Qualifications of Reading and Writing were confined to the Clergy: many of whom were but moderately converſant in either, and ſome as utter Strangers to them as any of the Laity.

So aſtoniſhing, in conſequence of this Deſtitution of Literature, was the Credulity and Superſtition of thoſe Times, that the Proſperity both of the Body and Soul was attached to the Performance of the ridiculous Exerciſes of Devotion then in Vogue; and it was a common thing to aſcribe all Misfortunes to the Neglect of ſome ſtupid Ceremonies, pretty much in the Spirit of the old unenlightened Romans, who durſt not give Battle, or undertake any Buſineſs of Importance, if any flaw was found in the Victims deſtined for Sacrifice, if the Flight of Birds was not according to the Rules of a good Omen, or if the ſacred Chickens had not eaten with a good Appetite.

In this Abyſs of Infatuation our Anceſtors and indeed all Europe remained for Ages; 'till a daring Friar in Germany ſtood forth, and animated by his Example many Parts of Chriſtendom to ſhake off the Yoke of Superſtition; which, it muſt at the ſame Time be confeſt, could not have been much longer borne; as the

Revival of Learning had been gradually opening the Eyes of the World for half a Century before his Appearance. The Edifice of papal Power was beginning to totter in more than one Country; and as the Roman Republic was formerly ſaid to have been ſo ripe for Deſtruction, that had Cæſar failed, ſome equally reſolute and aſpiring Head of a Faction muſt have overthrown it; with no leſs Propriety it might have been aſſerted of the Church of Rome, that if Luther had not begun its Demolition, another certainly would; as according to the uſual Courſe and Appearances of Things, its univerſal Influence and Deſpotiſm had not long to laſt.

But, tho' we were of the firſt to admit and incourage the Reformation, yet the Spirit of the Nation was ſtill fetter'd by the Weight of an oppreſſive and almoſt unlimited Power in the Government. Our Conſtitution was then far from being ſettled on its preſent Footing, and afforded us no real Title to call ourſelves free. We were loaded with all thoſe Impediments that little Minds, poſſeſſed of great Authority, are always ready to throw in the Way of intellectual Improvements; and tho' we were faſt emerging from Barbarity, and had made no inconſiderable Progreſs in Letters, and in the Arts of Civilization, it was long before we compaſſed that Extent of political Liberty which alone enables a People to ſhew themſelves in every Light of their Character.

The Revolution is the Epocha from whence we may date the complete Effulgence of our Diſpoſition. Since that Time, tho' Changes have happened, yet they have been rather of Perſonages and collateral Accidents;

cidents; the main Body, as it were, of that Spirit which then informed the Nation, ſtill ſubſiſts unaltered and unimpaired; and the Engliſh of thoſe Days, were, in every eſſential Reſpect, the ſame People the Engliſh are at preſent. It is, therefore, chiefly, to thoſe who belong to this Period that our Obſervations muſt be applied.

FOREIGNERS, whoſe Verdicts will be particularly attended to in the Remarks on this Nation, tax us with a Temper immoderately addicted to whatever happens to be our favourite Purſuit; and obſtinately prone to truſt intirely to our own Judgment. Herein they ſeem not miſtaken: neither is it in the leaſt ſurprizing that we ſhould really prove ſuch as they repreſent us, when we reflect how difficult it is for human Nature to act with Moderation in the Tranſition from extreme Oppreſſion to exceſſive Liberty. This is preciſely our Caſe. From the heavieſt Bondage under our ancient Form of Government, and the blindeſt Subſerviency to the Dictates of an illiterate, imperious Clergy, we have made our Way to the moſt unbounded Freedom both in civil and religious Matters; we think, we ſpeak, and, which is more, we act, without Reſtraint, in whatever relates to either; as we have found means to ſubject both to far more than bare Speculation.

IN no other Country dare Individuals conſult their own Opinions on theſe Topics, and preſcribe to themſelves their own Limits of Thought, Speech, and Conduct in the Manner we do: Whence Monteſquieu ſays very truly, that in all our Writings, *On y voit des Gens qui ont penſé tout ſeuls*, it is evident that every Man has thought for himſelf. Others before him had

made nearly the ſame Obſervation, when they took notice what little uſe our Authors made of Quotations, and how boldly they delivered and inſiſted on their own Apprehenſions of Things; widely different in this from the Reſt of almoſt all Mankind, who, in general, very ſubmiſſively conſent to be led by thoſe in whom the legal Direction reſides.

HENCE, there is no People according to the unanimous Avowal of Foreigners, over whom Prejudices have ſo little Influence as the Engliſh. Many even of thoſe, a moderate Portion whereof is occaſionally beneficial to the Community, have been rooted out without the leaſt Mercy. The Reſpect due to Royalty, for Inſtance, of which it is certainly better to have a little too much, than much too little, is rather becoming obſolete. Nobleneſs of Birth is held much cheaper than it is neceſſary or proper it ſhould be; and the Bars of Diſtinction between the different Claſſes of the Community are not ſtrong enough to reſiſt the Impertinence of the Vulgar; too wantonly ready to recall to Notice the Level on which Nature has placed all Mankind, and very unwilling to yield any Precedence to Rank and Dignity of Station.

THIS Want of Reverence for their Betters in the Engliſh Commonalty, may be deduced from the unfortunate Æra of our civil Wars in the laſt Century; when the outrageous Proceedings of the fanatical Party having overturned the Throne, and almoſt deſtroyed the Nobility, diffuſed among the People a contemptuous Hatred for both. A Miſchief which the Reſtoration did not cure from the unpopular Meaſures and licentious Lives of thoſe in Power; much leſs the Revolution,

lution, which being founded on the broadeſt Bottom of civil Liberty, befriended thoſe republican Principles on which this Diſreſpectfulneſs was partly founded.

WITHOUT abetting thoſe Slaviſh Maxims that unneceſſarily or undeſervedly exalt any Individuals above others, it may be aſſerted that no Danger can accrue to public Freedom, and that no Perſon need apprehend any Diminution of his Importance, by allowing honorary Diſtinctions to thoſe whom Fortune has placed above him; ſince the leaſt Reflection teaches that ſuch Conceſſions are purely formal and exterior, and far from interfering with his real Welfare, on the contrary promote it, by that Dilatation of Soul which the Great, if not totally loſt to all Sentiment, cannot help feeling, when they are treated with a becoming Deference; and by that Benignity of Heart, that Deſire to prove ſerviceable, which naturally accompanies, and is indeed produced by, ſo agreeable a Senſation.

OUR Diſregard for Eccleſiaſtics, to give it the ſofteſt Term, is another Charge brought againſt us by Foreigners, and chiefly by thoſe of the Romiſh Communion; who think our Behaviour in this Reſpect the more reprehenſible, as the Veneration they profeſs for their own Clergy borders as much upon Exceſs the other Way. But however They may be to blame, it muſt be confeſſed there is but too much room for this Accuſation; and ſuch a Conduct naturally tends to have ſo pernicious an Effect upon our Morals, that Impartiality obliges one to paſs Condemnation on a large Body of our Countrymen, and many of thoſe not of the Vulgar, for this heinous Treſpaſs not more againſt Decency and good Manners, than all ſound Policy.

NOTWITH-

NOTWITHSTANDING ſome of the Clergy may render themſelves unworthy of their Cloth (as no Profeſſion whatever is exempt from ſuch as diſgrace it) yet far the greater Number are Men of Virtue and exemplary Lives; and were it only for their Learning, of which, in the Opinion of all intelligent Foreigners, as well as in our own, they poſſeſs a more conſiderable Stock than the Clergy of any other Country, they are amply intitled to our Notice and Regard, as contributing ſo largely to ſupport the literary Honour of the Nation, and enriching it daily with ſo many valuable Productions.

WHATEVER Cenſures may deſervedly fall on the Conduct of ſome of their Predeceſſors, for having, in former Days, eſpouſed the Cauſe of arbitrary Power, yet it ſhould be remembered that in thoſe unhappy Times, the reſpective Rights of King and People were ſtill, in a great Meaſure, Matters of Opinion, of which, while undecided, each Party remained equally tenacious; and that in this Light a great Portion of the Laity were as criminal as they.

BUT if Objections lie againſt them on this Score, it ſhould not, on the other Hand, be forgotten that the firſt legal Stand againſt the iniquitous Deſigns of James the Second, was made by the Heads of the Church of England, who took the Lead in reſiſting him, at a Time when it was far from clear that he would meet with the Reverſe of Fortune that ſhortly after befel him.

FOREIGNERS,

FOREIGNERS, or to ſpeak more properly the French, bitterly complain of the Bluntneſs of our Diſpoſition and Behaviour, and of the Readineſs to *rompre en Viſiere*, as they phraſe it, to give every one his Own, that infects our Manners with a Rudeneſs which, they ſay, all our Commerce with the Muſes has not been able to ſoften.

IT may be granted, indeed, that we are not ſo ſtudiouſly poliſhed in external Modes and Habits as the French, and thoſe who glory in their Imitation; but is not the Failing they reproach us with rather a Happineſs? as it proceeds much more from the manly Boldneſs of our Temper, than from the Sourneſs of our Nature; which, whoever is well acquainted with this Nation will allow to be kind, compaſſionate and generous. It is true that in Converſation we are apt to ſcorn Diſſimulation, and to let ourſelves looſe without Neceſſity. But this ſame untractable Diſpoſition makes ample Amends for its Treſpaſſes, by induing us with Fortitude in all Matters of Moment, and rendering us Examples of Firmneſs and Reſolution in the great Scenes and Exigencies of civil and public Life. It is to this unyielding, and what our Enemies may call, if they pleaſe, this uncomplaiſant, rough Spirit that we owe our Freedom, and the Bleſſings of a Conſtitution ſuperior in every Branch of Excellence to that of any other Country. Hence, though our lower Claſſes may be leſs polite, the better Sort have more Strength of Underſtanding than is known elſewhere in thoſe of their Degree; and few, ſurely, will deny that exceſſive Refinement in the mere Modes of Intercourſe tends to wear away the Truth and Simplicity of Nature, (both indubitably the

moſt

moſt agreeable Endowments of the Heart) and to ſubſtitute in their Stead, the Diſguiſe and Affectation of Art; which, however they may pleaſe the Eye, and engage the Affection of ſhallow Perſons, are much leſs acceptable to Men of Judgment and Penetration, than open, downright, unſtudied Plainneſs.

In conſequence of this Frame of Mind, an Engliſhman, when convinced of the Propriety of what he is about, affronts all Oppoſition, ſets Cuſtom at Defiance, and follows the Dictates of his Reaſon boldly, and in ſpite of Sneers and Cenſure, from whatever Quarter they may proceed.

After having vindicated the general Character of our Countrymen in theſe Particulars, it muſt, on the other Hand, be acknowledged there are ſome Flaws in it of a very unhappy Tendency.

Our Tempers are often violent and ungovernable in a Degree that borders upon Phrenzy. We are apt ſuddenly to take the moſt pernicious Reſolutions, and to execute them with the moſt fatal Promptitude. Many among us, when thwarted in their Deſigns, have inſtantly loſt all Patience, and abandoned themſelves to a total Neglect of their Intereſt and Fortunes. Others, on the leaſt Diſcouragements in the Proſecution of Buſineſs, have immediately betaken themſelves to the moſt deſperate Courſes. Even the fair Sex participate of this outrageous Impetuoſity of Soul; and there are Precedents of ſome who croſſed in their Inclinations by parental Authority, or the Intervention of Accidents, have ſworn to accept of the firſt Offer, and have done it accordingly.

This

THIS unaccountable Propenſity to quarrel, as it were, with their Deſtiny, is an epidemical Vice in the People of England, who may not improperly be ſaid, on theſe Occaſions, to wreak their Vengeance on themſelves for the Severity of Fate.

THE uſual Extravagances which Heat of Youth and Warmth of Paſſions univerſally inſpire, are in this Country carried to Lengths unheard of elſewhere. The ſtrangeſt Exceſſes of all Sorts equally prevail among the High and the Low. Our daily Papers are full of them, not a few Originals in their Kind; but many of them are often attended with the moſt ſerious Conſequences; thoſe ariſing from Intoxication eſpecially, are ſometimes terrible. It is even ſaid that in the brutal Fury of Drunkenneſs Men have gone ſo far as to aſſociate themſelves by mutual Oath for the Deſtruction of the firſt of their Fellow-creatures who might unhappily fall in their Way, and have too faithfully kept their Word.

CERTAIN it is that a Proneneſs to Miſchief is among us too commonly the Reſult of a Debauch; our reſtive, impatient Spirit, at all Times averſe to much Controul, becomes then incapable of any.

NEITHER can it be denied that a wanton Commiſſion of Irregularities is frequently the Concomitant of that libertine Courſe of Living to which Numbers of our younger People are ſo much addicted. This was remarkably exemplified about half a Century ago, at the latter End of Queen Anne's Reign, in that ignominious Combination of Individuals ſo well known by the Name of Mohawks.

A For-

A Forgetfulneſs of their Dignity has alſo been objected to our Nobility and Gentry, in mixing too ſociably with their Inferiors, ſharing their Diverſions, and ſometimes condeſcending to reſent Affronts from the meaneſt of the Populace, and even to enter the Liſts of Combat with them.

But they who have made the Popularity of their Behaviour an Article of Cenſure, ſeem to forget the Nature of our Government, which has not ſet Mankind at that Diſtance from each other, wherein abſolute Monarchies or Ariſtocracies have placed them abroad. Our Great ones are in very frequent Want of the lower Claſſes in the Purſuit of their various Schemes of Ambition, and therefore dare not treat them with much Superciliouſneſs. They who have tried the Experiment have repented it; and though the Approximation of the great and the little World is become in ſome Meaſure only ſeptennial, yet in the Fluctuation of ſo free a Government as ours, it is far from impoſſible it may revert to its triennial Inſtitution, as framed at the Time of the Revolution. A Period which, of late, ſeems to ingroſs the Attention of People more than uſual, as the true Principles of our Conſtitution were then aſcertained by the unanimous Concurrence of all its Components; and as, according to the Maxim univerſally received in Politics, a Government, to ſecure its Duration, ſhould often reviſit as it were, the Fountain from whence it primitively flowed, in order to clear away the Obſtructions to its free Courſe and genuine Purity, contracted through the Inattention and Remiſſneſs almoſt unavoidable in any conſiderable Lapſe of Time.

Hence

HENCE, whatever Reſpect our Grandees have a Right to claim, and whatever Deference Men of Senſe and Breeding are ever willing to ſhew them, while their Reputation remains unſullied, yet they muſt not, and indeed to do Juſtice to their Magnanimity and Rectitude of Thinking, they expect not that Servility of Submiſſion which the tyrannical Nobles of ſo many other Countries are ſo jealous in exacting. As the Spirit of Liberty wherein they have been trained from their Infancy, has taught them to look upon it as the Birth-right of every Man, they too well remember the Leſſon ever to become guilty of Incroachments that would only tend to render their Lives uneaſy and their Perſons odious.

AND yet notwithſtanding this Moderation in our Engliſh Nobility and Gentry, they cannot eſcape that no leſs pernicious than ſhameful Proneneſs to Murmur and Diſcontent, which leads us perpetually to ſatiriſe our great Men, even for thoſe Failings that are almoſt inſeparable from the Condition of Humanity.

FROM this Reſtleſſneſs and Petulance of Diſpoſition ſuch Miſchiefs not unfrequently ariſe, as prove, at laſt, more detrimental to the Community than malicious People are willing to admit. Hence, thoſe wanton Undervaluations of Capacity and Inclination for Buſineſs. Hence, that mercileſs, indiſcriminate Miſrepreſentation which purſues Men in Office, and ſets them forth as totally unfit for what they have undertaken.

WHENCE

WHENCE this cavilling Humour proceeds is ſufficiently obvious, when we turn our Eyes on the Multitude of Competitors for every Department in the Adminiſtration, among whom the Diſappointed muſt neceſſarily form the moſt numerous Body; ever ready, from the indulgent Reception they are conſcious Envy will always give to Calumny, to fall with the moſt unrelenting Fury, on their ſucceſsful Rivals; to depreciate their Talents, and to deſcribe them as unworthy of the Notice Fortune has been pleaſed to take of them.

BUT, notwithſtanding this indefatigable Spirit of Detraction that ſo fiercely aſſails the Character and Reputation of all who happen to be highly promoted, and almoſt inclines unintelligent Byſtanders to imagine our Stock of Men of Genius is exhauſted; notwithſtanding the Malignity and Virulence to which every Man muſt pay Tribute who aims at becoming conſpicuous in this Nation, the real Truth is that our Nobility and Gentry are, in general, Perſons of far ſuperior Abilities to their Equals in Rank in other Countries; as indeed, it is but reaſonable to preſume they muſt be when we reflect that their Birth in a Land of Freedom, ſecures them an Education on a much more liberal and extenſive Plan than the Maxims of moſt other European Governments admit of; and that in the Progreſs of their Studies they are not ſtinted by thoſe Limits which Bigotry, or a puſillanimous Obedience to oppreſſive, undue Authority are ever ſo careful to preſcribe.

A con-

A convincing Proof of their intellectual Merit is the ſolid, ſubſtantial Encouragement they give to uſeful and reſpectable Arts and Talents, far exceeding the Conſideration and Recompence they procure abroad; where empty Praiſe, or a ſcanty Pittance, and collegial Obſcurity, is often the Portion of eminent Parts. While with us, they find Admittance among our prime leading men, whoſe Conviction of their Importance and Utility in public Affairs, often advances their Owners to the moſt honourable Preferments.

Besides, as it is impoſſible to make any Figure in our great national Aſſembly, without a previous Preparation by long Study and Meditation; without a very conſiderable Knowledge of Men and Things; without a keen Inſight into the Affairs of our own Country; and a large and an accurate Acquaintance with thoſe of others; as all theſe are neceſſary Requiſites in a Man who means to recommend himſelf to the public Notice, and as we have certainly many who deſerve and command that Notice, in the moſt ample Manner, we need no other Argument of the abundant Meaſure of real, intrinſic Worth to be found in many of the principal Conſtituents of this Nation.

As to their voluntary Degradation of themſelves, by intermixing with thoſe beneath them, which, as already obſerved, is a Reproach caſt upon them by inattentive, uninformed Strangers, it is no more than the Roman Nobility was wont to practiſe in the brighteſt Ages of that Republic. In whatever Country this levelling Spirit may occaſionally prevail, it is rather an

Evidence that the Privileges of Humanity preponderate againſt Pride and Haughtineſs, than that either the Great have loſt Sight of their Dignity, or the inferior Claſſes a proper Senſe of what is due to their Superiors.

A Characteriſtic highly honourable to our Nobility and Gentry, which enhances their Eſtimation among Foreigners, in Proportion as theſe feel their Deficiency in that reſpect, and contributes as much as any Thing to eſtabliſh an eſſential and national Diſparity between us and the French particularly, is that Undejectedneſs of Mind with which an Engliſhman bears the Frowns of a Court; that Fidelity of Friendſhip he experiences from his Intimates; that Continuance of Notice and Regard he meets with from his Acquaintance, none of whom think it incumbent on them to relinquiſh him on Account of his Loſs of Favour; but on the contrary, while they judge his Conduct and Character unimpeachable, rather teſtify more Eſteem and Attachment to him than before. A ſtriking Contraſt to what is ſeen abroad, eſpecially in France, where whoever falls under Diſgrace at Court is abandoned on every Side, and fled from with a Puſillanimity that fully ſhews the Degree of Abjectneſs to which Deſpotiſm can ſink the human Soul; while the Magnanimity diſplayed among us, on ſuch Occaſions, demonſtrates as clearly the Elevation of Mind of which Mankind is ſuſceptible, when under the auſpicious Influence of a rational Government.

The moſt fatal of thoſe Habits for which we deſerve to be ſtigmatized, is that amazing Propenſity to Self-Deſtruc-

Deſtruction, which diſtinguiſhes us in ſo deplorable a Manner, from every other civilized Nation. Were we to imitate the Romans in this Reſpect, and put a Period to our Lives, only to ſave ourſelves from Slavery or from Infamy, there would then exiſt ſome Shadow of Excuſe; but the moſt weak and groundleſs Pretences are often ſufficient to impel us to Suicide; and Perſons have ſometimes taken this dreadful Determination by Way of revenging themſelves on others to whom they knew their Death muſt occaſion much Sorrow or much Detriment. The fair Sex are not in the leaſt inferior to the Men in that horrible Species of Intrepidity, and are prompted to it by Motives equally frivolous; though commonly their Inducement to act ſuch terrible Tragedies is Love, a Paſſion that commits more Ravages, and does incomparably more Miſchief in this Country, than in any other whatever.

STRADA, in his Hiſtory of the low Country Wars, ſays that Mars only travelled in other Regions, but had fixed his principal Seat and Reſidence in thoſe; it may with equal Propriety be aſſerted, that Love, however known in other Countries, is no where elſe ſo powerfully felt as here; where daily Inſtances evince how effectual and extenſive his Dominion is over the Inhabitants of this Iſland, from the higheſt to the loweſt. Whence Foreigners obſerve very juſtly, that Connexions ariſing from its Influence, are of a much more ſerious Nature in England than in moſt other Places; where Love is oftner treated as an Amuſement, than as an Affair of real Importance.

THIS naturally leads one to ſpeak of the female Part of this Nation, which affords indubitably a far greater Number of beautiful Women than almoſt any other; and what is more to their Praiſe, no leſs valuable for their mental Endowments than for their external Charms.

FOREIGNERS, on their Arrival here, manifeſt their Conſciouſneſs of the ſuperior Comelineſs of our Women, by making it the continual Topic of their Converſation; and though ſome of them are not willing to exclude from the Right of Compariſon the Females of their own Country, yet their Cauſe is eſpouſed with ſo much Faintneſs, that one may eaſily perceive it is only done by Way of ſaving their Honour, and enabling them to make a ſort of decent Retreat from the Field of Contention, where they well know they could not maintain their Ground, and therefore wiſely avoid much Diſcourſe on that Subject.

STRANGERS unanimouſly agree in their Deſcriptions of our Engliſh Women, with whoſe Gentleneſs of Temper, and unfeigned Modeſty, they ſeem chiefly to be captivated; and invariably concur in repreſenting them of a decent, unaffected Deportment, and of a tender, affectionate Diſpoſition; in all this they certainly exceed moſt Women; and to crown their other good Qualities, are above the Littleneſſes of Diſſimulation, and dare nobly avow their Attachment when they deem it honourably placed and deſervedly conferred. Their unſhaken Fidelity to thoſe on whom they have fixed their Choice, and their chuſing a Lover without ſuffering themſelves to be influenced by

fordid

ſordid Motives, are inconteſtible Proofs of the Sincerity of their Affection, and of their Greatneſs of Mind. Examples of this Sort are ſo common in England, that they ſcarcely engage any particular Notice, and are ſpoken of as Things of Courſe, at which Nobody is expected to teſtify any Surprize. Hence it is, that we ſo frequently hear of what the Intereſted call diſproportionate Matches; that is to ſay, where Inclination has been principally conſulted, and where the Circumſtances of the Parties are widely different. Events of this Nature are much rarer Abroad; where the Women are generally more ſolicitous about the pecuniary Qualifications of their future Partners, than intent on their perſonal Graces, or their intellectual Merit; both powerful Attractions with the fair Sex of our Iſland.

But as eminent characteriſtical Virtues are ſeldom found in any Country, without ſome Allay of that Exceſs which often degenerates into Vice, it muſt be confeſſed, that this Reſolution of Temper, which carries our Women through laudable Determinations, and ſuch as do equal Honour to their Head and Heart, alſo accompanies them in the Execution of Deſigns highly diſgraceful to their Taſte and Underſtanding. What, for Example, can a Woman of Birth and Education alledge in her Excuſe, when forgetting the Dignity of her Character, and the Diſproportion of Mind and Soul that muſt ever prove a Bar to intellectual, the greateſt and only laſting Endearments, ſhe deſcends to an unpoliſhed Menial, a groſs Plebeian; and thus, openly trampling on all Delicacy of Sentiments, in a Manner tells the World, ſhe values nothing in a Man but the Difference of Sex?

Of all the Accuſations Prejudice has formed againſt this Nation, there is none more void of Truth, than that which the French, of all our Neighbours, are perpetually urging againſt us (if indeed it may not be affirmed they are the original Inventors and Propagators of it) the Charge of a ferocious Diſpoſition, prone to indulge itſelf in Scenes of Blood and Barbarity. If by this, they would mean no more than a Fondneſs in our lower Claſſes for Paſtimes of the rough, gymnaſtic Kind, the Combats of Animals, and ſometimes of Gladiators, there is no denying, that, till very lately, Exhibitions of this Kind were highly favoured, and even met with Encouragement and Applauſe from no few of the better Sort. Neither can it be diſſembled that Countenance is ſtill given to ſome Remains of thoſe boiſterous and inelegant Amuſements. But if the French, or any other Miſrepreſenters of our Cuſtoms and Manners, led away by ſuch Appearances, infer from thence, that we are of a ſanguinary, cruel Temper, they certainly go wide of the Mark. Humanity is an Appendage, which no Foreigner well informed, and converſant in our Ways and real Character, was ever backward in allowing us. All our Laws and civil Regulations powerfully favour and ſecond ſuch a Spirit. There are few Inſtances of private, and none of public or legal Cruelty among us, comparatively with thoſe exerciſed in other Countries. The Rack, and other Methods of extorting Confeſſion from thoſe who are ſuſpected of Crimes, or of tormenting Criminals to force them to a Diſcovery of their Accomplices, are unknown here; as well as the dreadful Tortures with which Death is elſewhere ſo frequently

frequently inflicted on the Guilty. The Differences and Quarrels among the lower Sort, are not attended with thoſe immediate Murders, or premeditated Aſſaſſinations, ſo common Abroad; and Duels, ſo deſtructive in other Nations, but ſeldom happen among our Gentlemen. Even the worſt Members of the Community, Robbers and Highwaymen, are celebrated over all Europe for abſtaining from Deeds of Inhumanity. What renders this the more remarkable, is the Facility and Expedition with which Perpetrators of Thefts, and other Violators of the Law, are diſcovered and brought to Juſtice; which one might imagine would tempt them to rid themſelves at once of any who were likely to become Evidence againſt them, conformably to the deteſtable Maxim ſo thoroughly practiſed by their more abandoned Brethren abroad.

An Obſervation that frequently recurs in the Diſcourſe of judicious Foreigners, is that, in the midſt of immenſe Wealth, we ſtill retain an Averſion to all Kind of Effeminacy. Our good Cheer is rather noted for its Abundance, than for culinary Refinements; and we but little indulge ourſelves in that inactive Eaſe and Indolence of Body and Mind, which are the uſual Reſult of Opulence in moſt other Countries. Our Modes of paſſing Time, even with thoſe who are moſt unemployed, all ſavour of Activity and Manlineſs; and even the tender Sex, on all Occaſions, give the Preference to thoſe Amuſements that afford them Exercise. While, on the contrary, a Propenſity to ſedentary Pleaſures, characteriſes almoſt all the neighbouring Nations: Thoſe not excepted, who pretend to a much greater Degree of Vivacity, than falls to our Share.

THIS active Diſpoſition is accompanied in moſt Individuals, with ſuch a Meaſure of ſpirited Behaviour and perſonal Courage, as even thoſe who would gladly curtail the Number of our ſhining Qualities, are obliged to bear witneſs to. There does not certainly exiſt a People more celebrated on that Account, and who yet make a leſs Parade of their Bravery, and are more inclined to a peaceable Demeanour; of which no completer Argument can be adduced, than the friendly pacific Life led by the Gentlemen of our Fleets and Armies among themſelves; who with great Juſtice, may be ſaid to reſerve their Proweſs for the Enemies of their Country; and whoſe ſociable Intercourſe is ſeldom diſturbed by that Demon of Turbulence and Quarrelſomeneſs, which ſo much infeſts the military Part of other Nations; among whom, none furniſh more numerous Proofs of this melancholy Truth, nor indeed ſo many as the French.

NOTWITHSTANDING the Politeneſs and Elegance that of late Years have attended our public Recreations, and rendered them univerſally admired, the French, whoſe Emulation, or rather whoſe Jealouſy is ever on the Watch, have taxed us with Want of Taſte and Decorum in many of them, eſpecially the Stage; and though in their cool, diſpaſſionate Moments, they are eaſily brought to a Confeſſion of the ſuperior Ingenuity with which many of our Paſtimes are conducted, yet their Vehemence againſt our Drama knows no Bounds. They are quite unable to contain their Indignation when they hear an Engliſhman prefer a Shakeſpear

Shakeſpear to their Corneille, their Racine and others, whom they ſuperlatively eſteem, and would have all the World eſteem, with the ſame Degree of Enthuſiaſm, as the *humani Generis Deliciae*, the Delight of all rational Admirers, preferably to all other dramatic Writers, either ancient or modern. In Support of this Opinion they proceed to the Arraignment of our great Author before the Bar of French Criticiſm; and with the moſt atrocious Spite, enumerate all thoſe Faults and Blemiſhes that reſulted from the Complexion of the Times; and were as much an Appurtenance of their Spirit and Faſhion, as the very Dreſs he wore, and the Phraſes he uſed. An impartial Examiner of theſe French Strictures cannot fail to retort a much more ſevere, as well as truer Cenſure on their Ignorance and Defect of Apprehenſion, in not perceiving, or which is worſe, on their Malignity in affecting to overlook the innumerable Paſſages, where the Genius of that aſtoniſhing Poet ſhines with the Luſtre which defeats all Attempts of Compariſon between him and any of their Writers. It is truly of him we may ſay, in the Stile of Roſcommon, that the Sterling Weight and Energy of many of his Lines would afford Matter for whole Pages of French Poetry. Take indiſcriminately any of his remarkable Speeches, and it will be no Raſhneſs to aſſert that France can exhibit nothing equal to them in their Kind.

WHATEVER the French may boaſt of their Theatre, the Merit of many of their celebrated Plays is rather negative than poſitive, their chief Excellence conſiſting more in having no Faults, than in abounding with Beauties.

ties. Shakeſpear is preciſely the Reverſe; and according to Longinus, whoſe Treatiſe of the Sublime the French will admit as an Authority of ſufficient Weight, ſuch a Character in Writing is preferable to the former. In the ſame Manner as a great General, or a great Stateſman, however their private Lives may be clouded by Failings, or ſullied with Vices, are ſtill more valuable, and illuſtrious Members of Society, than other Citizens can pretend to be, however their Conduct may be irreproachable, and their Morals untainted.

THUS much for Tragedy; on the Nature of which, the two Nations hold Opinions as diametrically oppoſite, as they do on their reſpective Talents for that Species of Compoſition.

OUR comic Muſe has fared more favourably. Two celebrated Writers, both of them competent Judges, and both Frenchmen, St. Evremont and Voltaire, ſeem to allow us the Precedence; and it is worthy Notice that the former flouriſhed at a diſtant Period from the latter; at a Time when Engliſh Comedy was far from having acquired that Perfection which procured, a ſecond Time, a Frenchman's Acknowledgment of its Superiority over the French.

UPON the whole, perhaps the Fact may be that we have too much of Action upon our Stage, and the French too little of it on theirs. They delight in Dialogues wherein too ſtudious a Refinement of Thought and Expreſſion lets the *Vis dramatica*, the Spirit of the Drama evaporate. We, on the contrary, require that an

an animated Series of Incidents ſhould form the Body, and a lively Strain of Speech, unclogged by long Harangues, the Soul of a theatrical Performance.

WHATEVER Opinion the French may entertain of our tragic Writers, they are candid enough in admitting the great Merit of the Engliſh in all other Works of Genius, and every Kind of literary Production; a Praiſe which no Perſon converſant in the learned World will refuſe us; there being no Department, either of polite and agreeable, or philoſophical and profound Knowledge, which we have not cultivated with the moſt brilliant Succeſs.

As to thoſe Arts and Inventions that receive an additional Worth from the mechanical Dexterity and Expertneſs of the Artificer, there is no Part of Europe but what yields Teſtimony to the Variety of Improvements that owe their Birth to the Ingenuity of this Nation. Whatever bears the Stamp of Engliſh Workmanſhip is held in preference every where. There is a Vein of Solidity and Perfection conſpicuous in all that proceeds from our Hands; and manual Labour, which abroad is uſually heavy and incomplete, is here performed with a Degree of Neatneſs and Elegance that almoſt raiſes the Journeyman to the Artiſt.

ONE may conclude with an Obſervation of St. Evremont, a Man thoroughly verſed in human Nature, and who having long reſided among us, and, as his Epitaph in Weſtminſter-Abbey with great Truth records, ingratiated himſelf, by his eminent Merit, with all

all Ranks and Conditions here, was completely qualified to ſpeak of them with Diſcernment and Propriety. After mentioning ſeveral Things very much to our Advantage, he ſums up, in a Manner, our Character, by ſaying, *il n'y a point de Nation qui faſſe voir plus de Courage dans les Hommes, et plus de Beauté dans les Femmes, plus d'Eſprit dans l'un et dans l'autre Sexe*, there is no Nation that diſplays more Courage in the Men and more Beauty in the Women, and a greater Portion of good Senſe in either Sex.

Such is the Epitome that may be drawn of this Nation; undoubtedly the moſt celebrated of any in Europe, for whatever can render a People ſingularly remarkable. Its Government, political Notions, Maxims and Manners, afford an ampler Fund of Speculation than is found in any other of the great European Kingdoms, where the Inhabitants do not preſent us with that Variety of Characters and Incidents with which this Country ſo ſuperiorly abounds. Of this Foreigners are now become ſo ſenſible, that the Reſort of the moſt judicious and enlightened among them to England, has of late been much more frequent than formerly; and even among the genteel and faſhionable People abroad, a Tour to this Iſland is beginning to be deemed an almoſt neceſſary Article of Improvement.

OF THE FRENCH.

THE FRENCH, our neareſt Neighbours, and moſt dangerous Rivals, are the Nation it imports us to know beſt after our own. It is not three Centuries ſince they emerged from Ignorance and Barbarity, in which they were plunged ſtill deeper than ourſelves; and from whence they were much longer in completing their Deliverance. Their Minds, Manners, Laws, Cuſtoms, Government, and Religion, were groſs and abſurd, to a Degree ſcarcely credible. The different Parts of that vaſt Kingdom, were like ſo many diſtant Countries, between which the Communication was almoſt impracticable; and none but Armies, or very numerous Bodies of Men, and thoſe well armed, and provided with all Neceſſaries for Subſiſtence, (much in the Nature of the Caravans that traverſe the Wilds of Aſia at this Day) durſt venture to undertake a Journey of any conſiderable Length. Whoever was obliged to travel the Space of but half a Score Leagues alone, was always careful to make a Will previous to ſo perilous an Enterpriſe; as the Dangers he was liable to encounter rendered his Return very uncertain. Hence may be judged how little of Commerce and Trade was then known. The Jews who carried on the firſt, were few in Europe, from the unſettled Situation, it was in, and the deplorable Want of almoſt all

all Kind of Police; and they whom the powerful Thirſt of Gain induced to riſk themſelves in the midſt of ſo much Diſorder, were, from the ſuperſtitious Zeal of the Times, in continual Hazard of their Effects and Poſſeſſions. They who exerciſed Trade, were not in much greater Number, from the little Demand for the Conveniences of Life; the Elegancies and Luxuries of which People had hardly any Notion of. Coarſe Feaſting, Hunting, and rude Games of all Denominations, were then the Paſtimes of the Great, with a little Admixture of groſs Gallantry, ſuch as one may ſuppoſe muſt have prevailed among Men who could neither write nor read, and whoſe only Merit conſiſted in Feats of bodily Vigour and Activity.

The Monks who were in Poſſeſſion of what Learning was then in vogue, might rather be ſaid to have been the Keepers and Preſervers of the Means of future Knowledge and Literature, than the Cultivators of either. They did little more than tranſcribe and tranſmit to better Times, the Manuſcripts that fell into their Hands. An Inſtance of the Ignorance of the French in thoſe Days, is that the Engliſh, who were themſelves very illiterate, could yet furniſh them with Preceptors and Teachers; and this at a Time when one of their moſt enlightened Monarchs flouriſhed, Charles the Great, who publicly invited from this Iſland, the Men of Learning it had, ſuch as they were, in order to eſtabliſh what was to bear the pompous Title of the Univerſity of Paris, of which he is reputed the Founder.

For a Length of Years, or more properly of Centuries, the wildeſt and moſt abſurd Tenets of Belief, infatuated the People of this Country; and indeed the largeſt part of Chriſtendom; where even the ſpeculative Ideas of Things were generally inconſiſtent with any ſhadow of Reaſon. Enchantment, Witchcraft, and magic Influences of all Kinds, were predominant in the Perſuaſion of all Claſſes: When the Inclemency of Seaſons, or the Peſt of devouring Inſects had deſtroyed, or injured the Fruits of the Earth, Demons and evil Geniuſes were eſteemed the Perpetrators of the Miſchief; and thoſe unhappy Wretches, either Male or Female, whom Uncouthneſs of Figure, or Oddity of Behaviour, rendered Objects of Suſpicion, found it difficult to eſcape the Fury of the Vulgar; who often inſiſted on judicial Proceedings, in order to aſcertain the Guilt or the Innocence of the Parties. Theſe judicial Proceedings were ſuch, in all Caſes, as excite, one knows not moſt of which, Indignation or Contempt. Such as Trials by Water, by Fire, and numberleſs others too tedious, and too ridiculous to particularize. Immerſion in Water (for Inſtance) without ſinking, was fatal to the Immerſed, as it was reputed an Evidence of Guilt; and handling red-hot Iron without burning, was often required to clear a ſuſpected Character. In Suits for Goods and Chattels, it was common to leave the Deciſion, to what was called the Judgment of the Croſs, which was, in Fact, to the Strength or Adroitneſs of two Perſons, of whom he that kept his Arms the longeſt outſtretched, won the Cauſe he was fee'd to defend in this ſtrange Manner. In public

public Affairs it was exactly the ſame. We read of two royal Competitors, who, on the Eve of Battle, agreed to adjuſt their Claims by this Method. As to Demoniacs, the Conviction of their Exiſtence remained long in full Force; and even ſo lately as the middle of the laſt Century, both England and France were guilty of ſome ſhameful Enormities in this Reſpect. In the latter Kingdom, during the Reign of Lewis the Thirteenth, and under the Miniſtry of Cardinal Richlieu, (a Man whoſe Genius one might think would never have condeſcended to ſuch Infamy) a dreadful Inſtance of Credulity was manifeſted at Loudun, a Town famous ever ſince the Story of the Devils, who, at that Time, took Poſſeſſion of the Bodies of ſeveral Nuns there, at the Inſtigation of one Grandier, a Prieſt, who was legally convicted of the Crime, and executed without Mercy. A Tranſaction that reminds one of the horrible Infatuation which prevailed in one of our Colonies towards the Cloſe of the laſt Century. The Practice of exorciſing is not yet intirely obliterated in divers Provinces of France. And many are ſtill perſuaded of the frequent Agency of inviſible Beings, and of the ſupernatural Power they are able to exert in the Behalf of thoſe with whom they are ſuppoſed to be connected by reciprocal Compacts.

From this Review, which is not exaggerated, may be gathered what Opinions they entertained in the more eſſential Points of Religion; which, indeed, was little better than a Heap of ceremonious Abſurdities, on the one Part, and the tameſt and blindeſt Submiſſion to all Sorts of prepoſterous Notions on the

the other. Little was generally the Difference between the Inſtructors and the Inſtructed; the moſt ſtupid Ignorance was nearly the Portion of both. It is far from improbable, that ſuch Prieſts and Monks, who were guilty of carrying on Impoſtures (as it is likely ſome of them were) thought they acted a very laudable Part; and therefore piouſly tranſmitted the Fraud as a kind of Inheritance to their Succeſſors in Office, and poſſibly from ſimilar Motives of Piety, deceived even them into a firm Conviction of what they delivered to the Crowd, as Matters of Truth. This appears the moſt natural Way of accounting for the Multiplicity of miraculous Events, with which the Legends of thoſe Ages are filled, and the prodigious Number of Relics that were held ſo long in Veneration; for however corrupt human Nature may be in the Apprehenſions of ſome, it ſeems not capable of ſo much Depravity as to countenance the Suſpicion, that ſo immenſely numerous a Body of Men, as the ſecular and regular Clergy, ſhould have unanimouſly concurred in cheriſhing and ſupporting, knowingly, a traditional Syſtem of Forgery, for a Courſe of Ages.

BE that Conjecture as it may, the profound Stupidity of Mankind in thoſe Days, rendered it eaſy to hatch the moſt extravagant Tales; and to procure them a quick Circulation among People, who were, at all times, ready to devour with open Belief, whatever was offered to them under the Sanction of Religion.

THEIR Credulity was in Fact boundleſs; the Hiſtories of thoſe times are diſgraced by perpetual Incredibilities from the romantic Turn of all who meddled with Writing. Whence it may not perhaps, be without Truth inferred, that we can no more depend on their Authenticity, whenever they deſcend to Particulars, than upon what more ancient Writers have delivered concerning the two or three firſt Ages of Rome, or the Ægyptian Prieſts taken upon them to record of their primitive Dynaſties.

MORALITY and Devotion conſiſted much leſs in the Practice of Virtue, than in the ſcrupulous Obſervance of unmeaning Rites and needleſs Forms of Worſhip. Pure, manly Integrity of Life, diveſted of Church Farce and Scenery, was not admiſſible as any Proof of Goodneſs; and unleſs a Man followed the Example of the Crowd in the Demonſtration of his religious Principles, real Sanctity of Manners availed him nothing. The greateſt Proof Men could give of their Piety, was by renouncing all innocent Amuſements, debarring themſelves from every Comfort; and inflicting all Manner of Pains and Chaſtiſements on their Bodies. Thus, in the Warmth of devotional Zeal, the Men would throw into the Fire all their various Implements of Paſtime, and the Women all thoſe of external Decoration. They would often ſhut themſelves up in Retreats, and be ſecluded for a Length of Time, from the Converſation and Sight of Friends and Relations; and ſometimes, as an Expiation of their Sins, wear Sackcloth, or go barefoot a long Pilgrimage. Others would

would whip themſelves with knotted Cords, or tie an Iron Chain round their Waiſts. Such Modes of Penance were common even among thoſe of the higheſt Rank; a penitential Inſtrument of this Kind was found on the Body of Charles of Blois, when he was defeated and ſlain by his Competitor for the Duchy of Brittanny, John of Montfort. This happened in the Times of our Edward the Third, an Age as famous for Superſtition, as for Chivalry.

To theſe Scenes of barbarous Ignorance, from which ſcarce any Part of Europe was exempt, ſucceeded, at laſt, the Dawn of Literature, ſoon followed by that memorable Æra of the Reformation; the Spirit of which quickly diffuſed itſelf over all France, but met with an Oppoſition that involved that unhappy Country in the moſt bloody Contentions. The Diſpute was in a Manner between Knowledge and Ignorance, and the Partiſans on either Side, were equally zealous in the Cauſe. To ſuch a Height did Rage and Violence ariſe, that Men became afraid of appearing too learned and knowing; as the Poſſeſſion of any Book out of the common Track, was dangerous to the Owner. A rigid Conformity to the moſt frivolous Cuſtoms was inſiſted on; and even the leaſt Deviation from the eſtabliſhed Modes of Feſtivity, was reputed criminal. Such was the Abhorrence they were held in, who embraced the Tenets of the Reformers, that they were deemed unfit for Society; and even excluded from convivial Intercourſe. All Forms of good Breeding gave Way to the Fury that animated their Enemies. Even a King of France, Henry the Second, forgot the Reſpect he owed to his own Ma-

jesty so far as manually to abuse in open Court, a Nobleman of the primest Rank and Dignity in his Kingdom, who had Fortitude enough to espouse their Cause in his Presence. Nor were their Monarchs themselves, when suspected of favouring the new Opinions, secure from the Hatred and Abhorrence of their People. It seemed as if the French had resolved to revive those horrible Times when the Pope's Excommunication could even deprive a Prince of his Courtiers, and render his very Domestics averse to give his Person the most necessary Attendance.

To so fatal an Extremity was this Detestation carried at last, that Royalty itself was no longer a Safeguard from the utmost Malice and Implacability of the enthusiastic Multitude. Thus for testifying a Desire of Reconciliation with the Protestant Party, Henry the Third became odious to all his Romish Subjects, and fell a Victim, as well as his Successor Henry the Fourth, to that atrocious Zeal, which rendered Murders and Assassinations meritorious when committed on the Pretext of Religion.

Such was the dreadful Situation of France for upwards of half a Century; and as if the Devastations effected by public Massacres had not been sufficient to satisfy the Spirit of Altercation, and quench that sanguinary Thirst for mutual Slaughter, when public Feuds had subsided by Means of the Edict of Nantz, and the Settlement of Henry the Fourth on the Throne; another Demon arose to let out the best Blood in the Nation, the Phrenzy of Duelling; from the Influence of which, no Rank, however exalted, no Condition,

however

however obſcure, was any Protection; Eccleſiaſtics, nay even Biſhops, drew their Swords in perſonal Quarrels. What is ſtill more ſurpriſing, and ſhews in its fulleſt, and moſt forcible Light, the Prevalence of faſhionable Prepoſſeſſions, Henry the Fourth himſelf, one of the moſt amiable of Men, as well as one of the greateſt of Kings, was ſo far tainted by the general Contagion, as to offer himſelf (according to no contemptible Anecdote) as ſecond to his Favourite and prime Miniſter the Duke of Sully, who happened to be engaged in a very ſerious Diſpute relating to ſome Part of his Adminiſtration.

A Spirit of Quarrelſomeneſs and Contention, became at laſt ſo diffuſive and univerſal, that it entered into the Churches and Cloyſters. Prieſts and Monks, with their Lay-Attendants, when their Proceſſions met in the Streets, encountered like Parties in War. Pariſhes were at Variance with Pariſhes, and Convents contended with Convents, for the Right of Precedence. This Madneſs infected even the Courts of Judicature, between which (beſide ſundry other Frays of leſs Conſequence) a memorable Battle was fought in the very Cathedral of Nôtre Dame in Paris.

In the mean while, Commerce and Navigation, which by the Invention of the Mariner's Compaſs, and the Diſcovery of America, were flouriſhing among their Rival Neighbours, made but a ſlow Progreſs among them. The Reigns of Lewis the Twelfth, Francis the Firſt, and Henry the Second, (which took up more than half of the Sixteenth Century) were conſumed in foreign Wars. Thoſe of Francis the Second, Charles the Ninth, and Henry the Third,

which made up the latter Part of it, were filled with civil Diſſentions. The firſt Years of Henry the Fourth were no leſs tumultuous; and though the Pacification that enſued, gave him an Opportunity to ſignalize his Talents and Abilities in the Art of governing his Subjects in a Manner conducive to their Happineſs; yet this Period of his Reign was, unfortunately for them, of too ſhort a Duration to lay any permanent Foundation of future Proſperity. After the lamentable Death of that excellent Prince, they relapſed into their former Broils, and their unavoidable Conſequences, Diſorder and Confuſion throughout the whole Kingdom, and a total Neglect and Oblivion of the public Welfare.

During the former Part of this long Æra, their Unſkilfulneſs, or rather their abſolute Ignorance of elegant Manufactures was notorious; as an Inſtance of which, Silk was ſo rare in France, that it was worn by none but royal and princely Perſonages. Hiſtorians mention its firſt Appearance there at the Solemnity of the Wedding of Henry the Second's Daughter to Philip the Second of Spain, ſo lately as the Middle of the ſixteenth Century.

In other Individuals the Uſe of it would have been eſteemed an almoſt criminal Preſumption. The Heads of the Gallican Church in their ſynodal Decrees forbad it the Eccleſiaſtics of their reſpective Dioceſes, as a Piece of Vanity and worldly Luxury, derogating from the Sacredneſs and Gravity of their Functions and Character, and of a pernicious Tendency to the Morals of their Flock; by ſetting them an Example of Indulgence in expenſive and ruinous Finery.

Other

OTHER Paſſages might be cited to ſhew how unimproved the French were at that Day, in the Arts of manual Dexterity, and in the Contrivance and Fabrication of the Conveniences and Embelliſhments of genteel Life.

THIS Defect of national Induſtry continued longer than the Middle of the laſt Century. Mean while, the Materials of their Gaiety in Apparel, which was daily increaſing, were all imported from other Countries. Italy ſupplied them with Silk and Velvet. Holland and Flanders with Linen; and England with Cloth; and almoſt every Article of Elegance and Refinement was purchaſed from Abroad, a Circumſtance of which, Boileau takes remarkable Notice in his Writings, when celebrating the Felicity of his own Times, he mentions the Suppreſſion of ſeveral political Evils, and of this in particular, by ſaying

Les Etrangers privés de ces Tributs ſerviles,
Que payoit à leur Art le Luxe de nos Villes.

FOREIGNERS were now deprived of thoſe ſervile Tributes which the Luxury of France had heretofore paid to their ſuperior Ingenuity.

SUCH was the Lot of France till the Reign of Lewis the Fourteenth, which brought about ſo ſudden a Change in that Country and Nation, as the Hiſtory of no other can parallel. From domeſtic Faction and Strife, they grew into Concord and Unanimity. From an almoſt intire Stagnation of Trade and Commerce,

they engaged at once in Manufactures and Buſineſs of every Denomination; and from a total Want of Shipping, they in a ſhort Space, extended their Navigation to every Quarter of the Globe.

THIS is truly the Epocha, when the French may be ſaid to have roſe above Water. Till this Period, neither their Induſtry nor their Intellects had been ſufficiently exerted. Aſtrology was ſtill a reigning Study; and their prime Miniſters conſulted its Profeſſors and Adepts, as infallible Guides. The liberal Arts were but in their Infancy; and philoſophical Knowledge had ſcarce any Exiſtence. The principal Part of their Learning conſiſted in the Intelligence of Greek and Latin; and till the Eſtabliſhment of the French Academy, which was but a few Years before, they had not cultivated their own Language, with any Degree of Succeſs.

AT length a judicious and active Adminiſtration taking Place, after the Troubles of the Minority of Lewis the Fourteenth, ſet themſelves immediately to Work, in order to render palatable to the Taſte of the French Nation, the great Change in its political Conſtitution, effected under the two preceding Miniſtries of Cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin; whoſe Deſigns to raiſe the regal Authority above all Control, had been perfectly completed by the Annihilation of all Power in the Nobility, and the abſolute Reduction of the Proteſtant Party to the moſt unlimited Obedience. The gaining theſe two Points left the Court no other Views to purſue, than to convince the People by a good Government,

vernment, that this Revolution was for their Intereſt. Colbert, perhaps the greateſt Miniſter we read of either in ancient or modern Hiſtory, was the Man pitched upon to execute this Plan; which he conducted with a Wiſdom equal to the Importance of the Taſk. Aſſiſted by the Advice of thoſe in whom his own great Sagacity taught him to confide, he was at the ſame Time no leſs attentive and ſolicitous to open Channels of Information from all Quarters, by admitting to his Acquaintance and Familiarity the Men of Knowledge and Genius, from whoſe Converſation he could receive any beneficial Hints, and by refuſing the Acceptance of no Projects whenever they might come. Supplied with ſuch Helps, and endowed with a Vigour and Steadineſs of Soul, that could foreſee and reſolve to encounter Difficulties, he boldly entered upon the laborious Career of not only reforming Abuſes, but of ſettling the whole Syſtem of the Kingdom's internal Oeconomy on a Footing new and different in every Reſpect from the former: In a Word, of altering univerſally the Face of Things throughout the whole Realm. To compaſs this, the moſt indefatigable and minute Attention was turned to thoſe Arts and Improvements that were flouriſhing in other Countries. All Kinds of Induſtry were practiſed to pry into the Secrets of foreign Dexterity; and an indiſpenſible Determination was taken to rouſe, at any Coſt, the Ingenuity and the Emulation of Individuals, by Immunities and Rewards proportioned to the Degree of Merit they ſhould acquire in their reſpective Branches. That no Sort of Luſtre might be wanting to this great Undertaking, it was reſolved that Learning and Literature ſhould alſo

meet

meet with the ampleſt Recompence and Honours; and that all Europe ſhould be compelled, by the moſt glaring Evidence, to confeſs the ſuperior Felicity and Grandeur of France, to whatever it had enjoyed in any preceding Reign.

THUS Men of Science and Ability were invited from all Parts, and moſt bountifully patronized. Artiſts of all Denominations were encouraged to ſettle in France, by the moſt generous Munificence, and ſupported at the public Expence, in forwarding and bringing to Perfection, the various Arts, Inventions, and Manufactures they were expert in. No uſeful, no agreeable Talent remained unprotected; and nothing was omitted that could any Ways conduce to the Profit, or to the Reputation of the Kingdom.

UPON this Occaſion, it may not be improper to remark that Kingdoms and States uſually make the moſt ſhining Figure, immediately after their Deliverance from domeſtic Feuds. Not only France, but its Rival England, preciſely at the ſame Time, roſe from amidſt the Ruins of civil Diſtractions, and became more flouriſhing than ever. Germany too, long torn with inteſtine Broils, was recovering Vigour, and acquiring new Strength and Conſideration. Whence it appears, that however fatal Diſſentions are while they continue, they never fail to give Birth to proſperous Aftertimes; as when the Fermentation is over, and Tranquillity reſtored, the Abilities that are always called forth in thoſe Seaſons of Hurry and Confuſion, muſt ſtill find ſome Vent, after theſe have ſubſided; and the Purpoſes to which they were employed, ſubſiſting

no

no longer, they muſt neceſſarily be directed to others of a more ſerviceable Nature to the Public. The Activity which before was buſied in Factions and Intrigues, is turned to commercial or to military Schemes; and the State is thereby ſupplied with abundant Means of carrying on its Navigation, and trading Enterpriſes with Fervour and Alacrity, or of meeting a War with Spirit, and well grounded Hopes of Succeſs. Even thoſe Arts, whoſe Exiſtence and Cultivation belong more properly to the Tuition of Peace, are ſtill benefited by that general Aptitude and Propenſity to Employment and Action, naturally produced by internal Commotions, and which have always been experienced to ſurvive them in a moſt ſalutary Degree.

Thus, to cite an Inſtance from ancient as well as modern Hiſtory, Rome never attained to the Summit of Power and Magnificence, till that final Pacification and Settlement of Things, which gave the Empire to Auguſtus, and enabled the Romans, now freed from Diſcord, to exert their Capacity in the whole Circle of Arts and Sciences, and to render themſelves as illuſtrious by their Eminence in all polite and elegant Purſuits and Accompliſhments, as they were formidable by their Arms and Conqueſts.

From this juſtly celebrated Epocha of Louis the fourteenth's Reign, the French may be conſidered as quite another Nation; their Genius, Ideas and Manners then underwent ſo thorough and radical an Alteration, as would render inapplicable to the preſent Race, the Reflections that would be true in regard to their Anceſtors.

As

As much as the latter, from a Conſciouſneſs of their Freedom, were apt to be reſtive and untractable, and ready to break out in oppoſition to Government, their Deſcendants are become ſupple and obedient without Meaſure; and tho' Repreſentations, or rather Supplications, are ſometimes made to the Throne, by ſuch whoſe legal Functions intitle them to that Liberty, yet the main Body of the People are tame and paſſive in their Expectations of ſeeing any Grievances redreſſed; and have nothing of that Promptitude to proceed farther, than bare Complaints, of which the ſeditious Nobility of former Days knew ſo well how to avail themſelves.

From this univerſal Depreſſion of all Claſſes, they retain little of that Boldneſs and Fortitude of Speech for which they once were ſo renowned; and in whatever relates to public Affairs, rather inſinuate, than declare their Minds.

Tho' they excel in every Species of intellectual Endowments, and yield to no People in the Advantages reſulting from a polite Education, yet they ſeem to value themſelves much more on the Ability they derive from thence of making themſelves acceptable, and admired in Company and Converſation, than intent on uſing thoſe valuable Acquiſitions on nobler and more ſerious Occurrences.

True it is, indeed, that Opportunities of this Sort cannot be ſo frequent in an abſolute Monarchy, as in a free Country; but as there ſtill remain ſome, they who

who are ſtinted to them ſhould, for that very Reaſon, endeavour to improve them to the utmoſt.

But this is far from being the Caſe with the French; who, whenever Occaſions offer to diſplay their Talents in diſcourſing pertinently on Matters of State, ſeem rather ſtudious to avoid giving Offence to the higher Powers, than ſolicitous to handle the Subject with Fullneſs and Propriety; and therefore content themſelves with cautious Indications of what might be ſaid; and ſhun thoſe deep Diſquiſitions into Things, which, however they might evince the Capacity of the Speaker, would certainly render him obnoxious to thoſe whoſe Friendſhip and Favour he prefers to the dangerous Honour of being eſteemed a Man of Eloquence and Reſolution.

Thus the frequent Harangues made in their Parliaments, or, to ſtile them more properly, their Courts of Judicature, and in their provincial Aſſemblies of the States, ſavour but little of Strength and Firmneſs; though the Language may be laboured and refined, and the Rules of Rhetoric obſerved with great Accuracy and Preciſion, they are abſolutely void of that Energy of Thought, which even when alone can give Life to the commoneſt Words; but without which all the Powers of Diction are fruitleſs and inſipid.

Notwithstanding the Parade that is made in France of the Beauties of thoſe Speeches, they can pleaſe no Perſon converſant in manly, ſolid Eloquence, ſuch as diſdains to be fettered by any other Regulations than thoſe of Truth and Argument.

To

To ſpeak however, of theſe Performances with Impartiality, it muſt be allowed that ſometimes (not often indeed) one meets with ſuch as have their Merit; but it is at moſt of the ſecondary Kind. Elegance it may be called, but not Eloquence. It may participate of the Wit and Politeneſs of a Pliny in his Panegyric; but not of the Force and Grandeur of a Demoſthenes, or a Cicero in their Orations.

From theſe Premiſes it follows that whatever Magnanimity the French may poſſeſs on all other Emergencies, ſuch as in the uſual Concerns of Life between Individuals, or in a military Capacity, (in both which Inſtances it were Injuſtice to deny them a very honourable Share of Courage and Spirit) yet in a civil and a political Light, they are amazingly degenerated; and are fallen to a Degree of Puſillanimity and Abjectneſs equally low with that of any European Nation whatever; for tho' Forms of Law ſtill remain, their Validity cannot preponderate againſt Court Favour; which, whoever can ſecure, may bid Defiance to all the Laws and Judges of the Kingdom.

This they are ſo well aware of, that all who have any Affair in Litigation, are much more anxious to procure Friends and Supporters among thoſe who are known to have the Ear of Men in Power, than in preparing Arguments againſt the Day appointed for the Trial of their Cauſe; ſure of winning it, however weak the latter may be, provided they are ſeconded by the Countenance and Protection of the former.

THE great Wiſh and Study therefore of a Frenchman is to ingratiate himſelf with the Grandees, and what they rightly call *les Puiſſances*, thoſe who are inveſted with the Offices and Authority of the State; to obtain ſome Portion of which, is the capital Aim of every Man who aſpires at any Degree of Conſideration.

IN order to compaſs this their favourite Object, they employ a World of Arts and Fineſſes. Complaiſant, and even ſubmiſſive to thoſe who are much their Inferiors, but whoſe Malevolence might obſtruct their Deſigns, they will ſtoop to the ſeemingly moſt inſignificant Helps. Dextrous in ſeizing every Occaſion to pay their Court, they neglect none of thoſe trifling Opportunities of making themſelves agreeable, which, if not leading directly to the Point ultimately propoſed, are yet, perhaps, in reality, of as much Efficacy as others apparently more to the Purpoſe.

No People are, certainly, more indefatigable and ardent in the Proſecution of their Fortune and Advancement, eſpecially when labouring to obtain a Rank that will procure them Importance and Sway; when engaged in ſuch a Purſuit their Ambition overcomes all other Conſiderations, and there is often nothing they will not make a Sacrifice of, to accompliſh that inchanting End.

IN this Reſpect, they differ prodigiouſly from moſt other People, who have uſually ſome Spot of Reſerve,

ſerve, ſome Sanctuary on which no Views of Intereſt are able to incroach. But a Frenchman gives up all for the ſake of Vanity; and Miſtreſs, Wife, or Daughter, are too frequently parted with as a Price for Court Favour.

So unnatural and ſo ſcandalous a Condeſcenſion is owing to that univerſal Spirit of Gallantry which peculiariſes the French, and utterly extinguiſhes that Warmth of Attachment to any particular Perſon, which leads one to prefer the Poſſeſſion of her to all other Wiſhes and Expectations. Hence, there is but little of what deſerves the Name of Love in France; where a deſultory Change of Objects of Affection, renders Conſtancy a mere Exotic; and quickly diſſolves thoſe Ties that are ſo much more ſeriouſly formed, and durably maintained, among other leſs volatile Nations.

And yet, notwithſtanding the French are, in common, ſo little capable of Attachment to any Woman in particular, they are moſt ſincerely devoted to the Frequentation of the fair Sex in general; the Charms of whoſe Society conſtitute the Summum Bonum, their chief and ſupreme Pleaſure and Happineſs, much more than that of any other People. Whatever belongs to Taſte and Refinement is ſubmitted to their Deciſion; and they are unanimouſly allowed to be, without Control and Appeal, the Connoiſſeurs and Umpires in all that relates to Delicacy and Elegance.

But

But as no Advantage is without ſome Inconvenicncy, this Communication between the Sexes, though it poliſhes, and renders them more ſociable, yet, when carried to the Exceſs it is in France, cannot fail to be productive of ſome Evil. By this perpetual Concomitance of the Women, Gravity is almoſt effaced in the Men; while, from the ſame Cauſe, Modeſty and Softneſs of Behaviour have, in the fair Sex, given way to a Vivacity and Forwardneſs that can only become the other. At length, by a gradual Progreſſion, the Women have, with few Exceptions, aſſumed the ſame Degrees of Liberty that were heretofore the Privilege of Men only; and eſpecially among the Quality, abandon themſelves to Licentiouſneſs with leſs Shame and Reſerve than any other Women in Europe. In France a Lady's Lover, or rather Gallant, is as well known as her Huſband; and ſhe is often more diſparaged by her Infidelity to the former, while the Connection between them ſubſiſts, than by her Falſehood to the latter; who ſees and ſubmits to all his Wife's Proceedings with great Compoſure and Reſignation, or rather with great Indifference and Candeſſneſs; and is too complaiſant ever to ſeem informed of what is paſſing; many of them indeed, are only apprehenſive leſt their Wives ſhould beſtow their Favours on Men of a deſpicable Character, or of a diſagreeable Perſon.

The French are ſtrangely prone to value People on Account of their Family Deſcent; and whatever Jeſts the Natives of ſome other Countries may expoſe themſelves to in conſequence of that ridiculous Foible,

ble, the French are no Ways inferior to them in their Pretenſions to Importance and Dignity from ſimilar Motives.

THE Word *Nobleſſe* is never pronounced in France, without a Kind of Emphaſis, fully denoting their Reſpect and Conſideration for that Claſs of Society to which the Denomination is appropriated, and almoſt approaching to the reverential Pauſe of Homage and Awe, obſervable in the great Philoſopher Mr. Boyle whenever he mentioned the Supreme Being.

THIS Idea of Excellence ſuperior to the Reſt of Mankind, a Frenchman gives the fulleſt Scope to, when ſpeaking of Perſons of Birth; the countleſs Numbers of whom, diſperſed over all France, inſtead of convincing Men of the Futility of ſuch Kind of Merit, is on the contrary, through the moſt unaccountable Deluſion, eſteemed by the Natives a Proof of the Illuſtrioufneſs of their Nation. One often hears the Individuals of a Province enumerating the many noble Families it contains, and glorying over the Inhabitants of thoſe which, however more populous, rich, and commercial, have not ſuch high Names to boaſt of. This Infatuation is ſo univerſally prevalent, that even Domeſtics think themſelves intitled to Notice and Regard in Proportion to the Quality and Grandeur of their Maſters; thoſe who happen to belong to the principal Families, are as proud of their Livery, as if it were a Badge of Honour and Diſtinction;

on; and pretend to as much Deference at leaſt, as a *bon Bourgeois*, a ſubſtantial Citizen.

WHILE the Plebeians pay ſo willing a Tribute of Reverence and Submiſſion to Perſons of noble Blood, well may theſe raiſe a Superſtructure on ſuch a ready Foundation; and avail themſelves of ſo exceſſive a Prepoſſeſſion in their Favour. This they are very careful to do on every Occaſion that offers of diſplaying the great Senſe they cheriſh of their own Worth and Conſequence. Not only the Dignitaries of the military, but alſo thoſe of the eccleſiaſtical Liſt, (moſt of both whom are Members of the Nobleſſe) are equally elate on Account of their Birth, and ſo forward in giving the moſt ridiculous Proofs of their Vanity, that even Biſhops have been known to diſdain the Society of ſome of their Brethren, whoſe Origin was ignoble.

THERE is no Fear of ever ſeeing among the French Ladies of Quality, thoſe Inſtances of baſe Alliances by Matrimony, which happen ſometimes in England. A French Lady thinks herſelf rather condeſcending, when ſhe accepts of the Hand of a Gentleman of the long Robe; and ſome carry their Notions ſo high as to deem it leſs diſgraceful to live in a State of Gallantry with a Man of their own Rank, than of lawful Wedlock with one beneath it. In ſhort, theſe ſtrange Ideas operate ſo forcibly, and ſo generally, that a Huſband, among Perſons of Faſhion, however willing to wink at his Wife's Amours, would never forgive her if ſhe were to admit to her Embraces any one of a

Condition inferior to his own. And in Conſequence he treats, with more or leſs of Tenderneſs, the Fruit of her illicit Connections, according as he fancies it is nobly or meanly deſcended.

HOWEVER, to do the Nobility of France full and proper Juſtice, they are indiſputably a Body of brave and gallant Men; there is no Nation that produces a more martial Set of Individuals; the only Occupation of thoſe who belong not to the Church, being that of War; which they look upon as the natural, and moſt eligible Employment for a Man of Birth; and in Conformity to this Perſuaſion, reſpect the Nobility of other Countries proportionably to the Inclination they ſhew for the ſame Profeſſion.

VOLTAIRE, in his Henriade, has truly deſcribed them, when he ſays the Character of a French Courtier (Noblemen in France are all Courtiers) is to indulge himſelf at home, in all the Pleaſures of Peace and Plenty, without receiving the leaſt Tincture of Degeneracy; ready, at a Moment's Warning, to diſplay the moſt daring Intrepidity, and after acting the meaneſt Parts of Adulation and Servility at Court, eager to fly from a Round of Delights to the Field of Hardſhips and Danger.

THE Gentlemen of the long Robe (with us the Lawyers and Gownmen) are a Medium between the Nobleſſe and the Commonalty. But whatever Merit they may poſſeſs, and that of ſome is of the moſt conſummate Eminence, as it is among them the prime

Patriots

Patriots are found, yet as the Sword is not their Appurtenance, their Worth is eſteemed but at a ſecondary Rate.

THE Truth is, that as the chief and indeed, ſole Oppoſition to miniſterial Meaſures proceeds from that Quarter, the Court finds its Account in conniving at the Diſregard they meet with from the Nobleſſe; or to ſpeak more truly and properly, encourages People to undervalue them. Nor is it ſurprizing it ſhould, on all Occaſions, affect to treat them with Haughtineſs and Slight. As its Authority is maintained by other Means than thoſe of Equity and Law, and is often exerted againſt the Senſe and Judgment of the Parliaments in France, and in open Defiance and Contempt of their repeated Advice and Remonſtrances, the Members who compoſe theſe Aſſemblies cannot expect to enjoy the Conſideration and Deference paid to ſimilar Conventions of Men in free Countries, whoſe Power and Independence, by ſecuring them from ſuch tyrannical Uſage enable them to make good their Pretenſions to Dignity and Weight. They are, therefore, allowed no more Conſequence than a haughty and imperious Miniſtry is willing to beſtow, and never vouchſafes to deal out much of, unleſs to thoſe on whom it relies for Support.

HENCE, the Gownmen in France, tho' highly revered by all their thinking Countrymen, as the trueſt and ſtaunchеſt Friends to the Public, are in a State of Depreſſion, and looked on with a jealous Eye, by the ruling Powers, who ſeem to delight in mortifying

them as much as they dare, conſiſtently with the public Repoſe.

THESE Gentlemen of the long Robe, however grave their Buſineſs and Occupations, cannot diveſt themſelves in general, of that Airineſs of Port and Demeanour, which in a Manner, ſeems born and inherent in a Native of France. Numbers of them are the downright Apes of the Courtiers; whoſe Feſtivity of Deportment, and Smartneſs of Speech, they labour to copy with an Affectedneſs highly prejudicial to their Character; and which contributes not a little to that Inferiority in which they are held; as a ſervile Imitation of others is a tacit Avowal of their Superiority.

THE Juniors of that Profeſſion do not prepoſſeſs Foreigners with very high Notions of the French Magiſtracy. Their continual Endeavours to appear facetious and pleaſant; the ſtudied Spruceneſs of their Equipages; the Finicalneſs of their Apparel; the Juvenility of their perſonal Behaviour, and their manifeſt Admiration of, and Paſſion to excel in what conſtitutes the *bon Ton*, Summit of the Mode, cannot fail to render them completely ridiculous in the Eye of a judicious Spectator.

THESE young Magiſtates live in all the Voluptuouſneſs that Opulence can give Birth to. In Town they have their Palaces, and in the Country, Elyſian Retreats; where they enjoy themſelves in the *Luxu eru-*

dito,

dito, in all the learned Luxury of a Petronius; with whom many of them can vie in the Study and Experience of the moſt refined Methods of making Pleaſure the principal Buſineſs of their Lives.

NEXT to the Dignitaries of the Law, thoſe who ſhine moſt in France, by the Influence and Importance of their Station, are the Farmers General and Financiers; the richeſt Individuals of their Kind throughout all Europe. In former Days this was their only Commendation; but they too, have altered like all the reſt; and inſtead of being ſolely occupied in amaſſing Treaſures, they have learned another Leſſon, that of ſpending them with Splendor, and ſometimes with Profuſion.

NOTWITHSTANDING the Suſpicions to which they are univerſally liable among their Countrymen, Numbers of them are Men of the ſtricteſt Integrity, and make it their Study to merit, and obtain the Eſteem of the World, by the Irreproachableneſs of their Conduct in their reſpective Departments, and their Generoſity in the Intercourſes of Friendſhip and Society. Many of them patroniſe Literature; and moſt of them live in a liberal, hoſpitable Manner; and by their Prudence, and courteous Behaviour, deſerve and poſſeſs the familiar Acquaintance and Conſideration of the firſt Men in the Kingdom.

BUT as theſe Gentlemen are conſcious that Riches, however immenſe, do not carry with them that intrinſic

Value in France, which ſome other Nations allow them, they, for that Reaſon conſider them principally in the Light of Ways and Means to arrive at Honours and Diſtinctions. Hence, though Nobility is uſually the Recompence of military Merit, yet as there are alſo other Methods of obtaining it, and as every Frenchman wiſhes to be ſome Sort of a Noble, they, and indeed all who have acquired Wealth, make a Point of purchaſing ſome of thoſe nominal Employments, which confer the Right of Nobleſſe on their Incumbents, and enable them to appear in the *beau Monde* with an Advantage that Money alone cannot procure in France.

THE French Clergy ought already to have been mentioned, as a Claſs of Men of equal Importance with the Nobility itſelf, by the Influence they ſo diffuſively exert over the Minds of the Generality of People; and by the Immenſity of their Numbers, which compoſe a moſt formidable Body in the ſpiritual Field of Government; and help amazingly to keep the French Nation in Order and Subjection. The Regularity of their Lives is undeniable, and their indefatigable Diligence and Labours in the Duties of their Function, equally remarkable; no Clergy, ours not excepted, taking more, if ſo much Pains in the Inſtruction of thoſe who are committed to their Charge.

THIS, in general, is the Character they have a Right to claim; and whoever is well acquainted with the State of Things in France, muſt often have been witneſs to the Reality of what is here aſſerted.

THERE

THERE are, however, many who aſſume their Dreſs, and yet may be accounted neither Eccleſiaſtics nor Laymen; whoſe Buſineſs is to wait for Preferment, come whence ever it may. Theſe, called *Abbés*, who are very numerous, being reſtricted by no particular Rules, lead many of them a Life of Diſſipation and Libertiniſm, devote themſelves as much, or more than any Set of Men, to the Society of the fair Sex; and become no few of them celebrated for the Favours of every Kind, which they receive from their Predilection, as no Men in France can vie with them, in the Arts of Flattery, and the Talent of inſinuating themſelves into a Female's good Graces.

NOTWITHSTANDING the Numbers and Credit of Eccleſiaſtics of all Denominations in France, the Natives have much leſs of that Bigotry which infects other Romiſh Countries; and a punctilious Attachment to Modes of Worſhip is far from being ſo prevalent among them. This no Doubt is owing to the long Toleration of Proteſtantiſm, which, though baniſhed, has ſtill left ſome ſtrong Remains that will never be totally eradicated; if even one may not venture to ſay that ſo enlightened a Nation will not very long continue in its preſent Situation with Regard to Matters of Religion.

THERE is one Particularity wherein the French, and all other European Nations, of whatever Perſuaſion, differ eſſentially from the Engliſh, and that is the Manner in which they meet Death. The Engliſh, whether high or low, uſually preſerve an Intrepidity and Calmneſs

neſs in their laſt Moments, which is the Wonder of all Strangers, who are little accuſtomed to ſuch Scenes among their own Countrymen.

The French, whether from a ſuperior Senſibility they feel for the Enjoyments of this Life, or whether from a Spirit of religious Puſillanimity, are commonly very averſe to the Thoughts of dying. The latter ſeems, however, the principal Cauſe of this Averſion. Stifled or forgotten while at a Diſtance from the Grave, it breaks out on their Approaches to it; and they too generally become abſolutely ridiculous on thoſe Occaſions, from the minute Solicitude they betray in the careful Practice of every ceremonious Trifle enjoined by their Tenets; the full and circumſtantial Obſervance of which, their Eccleſiaſtics are, at ſuch Times, ſo peculiarly zealous in promoting and enforcing, that nothing but the Piety of their Intentions, and the Sincerity of their Belief in the Neceſſity of all this ſuperſtitious Apparatus, can excuſe the troubleſome Officiouſneſs of moſt of them; who ſeem not to reflect that it is a Man's Life, and not the Manner of his Death, on which his Hopes or his Fears are to be founded.

This anxious Imbecility often renders a dying Frenchman the Prey of thoſe watchful, alert Friars, who go about comforting the Sick, and extorting from their Purſes thoſe Donations and Largeſſes which contribute ſo materially to their Subſiſtence. From this Fund of Apprehenſions and Terrors, flows the Diſburſement of no trifling Sums to defray the Charges of the many thouſand Maſſes, with which their laſt Wills are ſo frequently overburdened. Whence it may be inferred,

inferred, that theſe unmanly Weakneſſes prevail; not only among the poor and illiterate, but even among thoſe, who by their Education or Knowledge of the World, might have learned to ſhake off ſo ſhameful a Load. But as if Debility of Soul in their latter Hour was a Characteriſtic of the French Nation, it is preciſely among their *grands Seigneurs*, the prime Men in the Realm, we meet with the moſt glaring Inſtances of thoſe death-bed Devotees; it is no uncommon Thing to ſee a Miniſter of State, hackneyed for Years in all the Infamies and Iniquities of a Court, acting over all thoſe Mummeries, and thinking thereby to ſecure himſelf a favourable After-Reckoning.

It muſt however be confeſſed, the French are not the only People deſerving of thoſe Strictures, as they are ſtill more applicable to ſome of their ſouthern Neighbours.

There is a Species of Beings in which France abounds; and of which it has ſent forth numerous Colonies into other Countries, ours eſpecially, in the Perſons of many of thoſe who viſit it on Pretext of Improvement; theſe are what the French call *Petits Maitres*, a Race well known in England by the Appellation of Fops and Coxcombs.

The Derivation of the French Title is not very ancient, it took its Riſe during the Troubles of the Minority of Lewis the Fourteenth, from the Haughtineſs and Arrogance of thoſe who headed the Oppoſition againſt the Court, and who, elated with the Succeſs they had at firſt, grew ſo preſumptuous in their Behaviour,

viour, and ſo important in their own Conceit, as to become equally the Subjects of Hatred and Deriſion.

By a *Petit Maitre* is now generally underſtood one whoſe Aim is either to appear more knowing and judicious, or of more Weight and Conſequence than others; or to differ from them ſo ſtrikingly, as to attract their particular Attention.

Thus Superiority of Wit and Diſcernment, and a refined Delicacy of Taſte, is what ſome are fond of inculcating a Perſuaſion of their fully poſſeſſing. Others, who are more conſcious of their Deficiency in theſe Reſpects, and have not Effrontery enough to avow ſuch Claims, endeavour to make themſelves conſiderable by an Enumeration of their pretended Friends in high Life, with whoſe Acquaintance and Familiarity they are perpetually making free in their Diſcourſes. Others, for Want of better Means of recommending themſelves to Notice, affect a Singularity in their Apparel. Some again labour to attain this End by a Peculiarity of Behaviour: Theſe make it conſiſt in their Tone of Voice and Modulation of Speech; thoſe in their Gait, and others in their Aſpect. They leave, in ſhort, no Oddity untried, and ſeem no leſs pleaſed in being diſtinguiſhed from the reſt of Mankind by Dint of inſipid, and offenſive Perſonalities, than if they had acquired a Reputation founded on ſuperior Talents and Qualifications.

Though France is not the only Country that produces ſuch Characters, yet as it affords the completeſt Originals in the Kind, and of which other Nations exhibit

hibit but faint, unequal Copies, it is doing the French no Injuſtice to mention them as more liable to Animadverſion for theſe Foibles than any other People.

Spruceness, and what may be ſtiled the Tip of the Mode, is what the French delight in adhering to with the ſtricteſt Conformity. In order to effect this Purpoſe, every Thing elſe is neglected in the Article of Dreſs, that plain Reaſon and common Senſe would otherwiſe ſuggeſt. Whatever is reputed faſhionable among the Great, becomes equally ſo among the inferior Claſſes; who if they cannot imitate their Superiors in Coſtlineſs of Garb, will yet beſtow a Similarity of Cut and Form on the moſt wretched Materials. Excluſive of the uſual Coarſeneſs of their Apparel, they are as careleſs of it as a Grandee, whoſe Wardrobe affords him an endleſs Change. But this Variety is ſeldom the Caſe of the Commonalty in France, whoſe Stock is generally very ſtinted. Though a Parade of tinſel Finery accompanies it, their Ingenuity has a fatiguing Taſk to give it an Appearance of Renovation, whenever an Alteration of the Mode requires it; and if a Jeſt may be permitted on the Narrowneſs of People's Circumſtances, there was ſome room for the Compariſon a Foreigner once made at Paris, that a French Coat often underwent as many Contrivances to enable its Owner to face the Metamorphoſes occaſioned by the Mutability of Taſte, as Diogenes's Tub (according to Rabelais) underwent Poſitions to ſhelter its Maſter from the Diverſity of Wind and Weather.

CLEANLINESS is by no Means ſo much conſulted in France, as it is in England; which by the unanimous Acknowledgment even of thoſe Strangers who are leaſt diſpoſed to favour us, is the true Seat of Decency in all its Branches. The Dutch are finically clean; and ſubmit to the moſt ſlaviſh Perpetuity of Labour, to maintain that Appearance of Neatneſs, which all who have ſeen that Country are ſo juſtly ſurpriſed at. But there are eſſential Exceptions to this Rule, and ſuch as they have no Plea for, an unpardonable Neglect of their Perſons, and an affected Ruſticity of Apparel. No Nation is ſo completely neat, both in their Cloathing and Furniture, as the Engliſh, who make it, in a Manner, their Buſineſs to be all of a Piece: Very different in this Reſpect from moſt other People, eſpecially the French; many of whom, while they exhibit themſelves abroad, *Nitidos et comptos a capſula totos* (as Seneca expreſſes himſelf of the Beaux and Fribbles of his Days) as ſpruce and fine as their Toilet can make them, leave ſuch Homes behind them as our commoneſt Tradeſmen would be loth to dwell in.

THE French boaſt loudly of the Superiority of Architecture which Paris poſſeſſes over London. But it ſhould be conſidered that this is chiefly owing to the immenſe Quarries of Stone in its Neighbourhood. In all that depends on the Exertion of Induſtry, they fall far ſhort of the Engliſh; the Inſides of thoſe Houſes, whoſe Outſides are ſo grand, abounding with Proofs how much more juſt and proper our Notions are of what appertains to the Utility, the Convenience, and the Elegancy of domeſtic Life.

ON

On the other Hand the Environs of Paris form a ſtrong Contraſt to thoſe of London; and are an unanſwerable Argument of the greater Progreſs of Proſperity among our People; proceeding not more from the Difference of Government, than of Genius. That of the French ſeems not to be calculated for the Continuity and Perſeverance of Toil and Application neceſſary to bring Agriculture to Perfection; while the Engliſh, on the contrary, have an ample Fund of thoſe Qualities. From theſe Cauſes, as much as from Oppreſſion, the French Peaſantry live in a State of Indigence and Poverty, utterly unknown among the Engliſh. Hence their Buildings and Plantations differ ſo widely from thoſe in England; where Compactneſs and Plenty of good Furniture characteriſe the firſt, and the utmoſt Efforts of Cultivation embelliſh the laſt. While in France one meets with few but ſordid Houſes miſerably furniſhed, and extenſive Tracts of Ground, unſkilfully laid out, and wretchedly tilled. Such in common is the Aſpect of the Land throughout this large Kingdom; where the Eye travels on, with little or no Relief from that Variety of Culture, that Interſperſion of Gentlemen's Seats, and ſubſtantial Farms, of arable Land, Meadows, Gardens, and Incloſures, that ſo beautifully diverſify the Face of our Country, and prove it inhabited by a Race of Men, much better acquainted with the Means of procuring an eaſy and a comfortable Life.

Another Proof of our Superiority in uſeful Improvements, is that our very Diverſions carry with them an Air of Elegance, which the French, who are certainly as fond of agreeable Paſtimes as the Engliſh, have not

not yet arrived at, in the Midſt of all that Oſtentation which accompanies their Pleaſures. They have neither a Ranelagh, a Vauxhall, nor even a Marybone, nor indeed any Amuſement of the Kind comparable to them in Point of true Politeneſs; and where, after the Fatigues of Buſineſs, the Gentleman, the Merchant, the Citizen may, without any Impropriety of Character, and at a very moderate Expence, indulge themſelves in a moſt charming and moſt rational Entertainment.

Paris has however, one manifeſt Advantage over London in the Number and Decorations of its public Gardens. But neither the Tuilleries, the Luxembourg, nor the Palais-Royal, can, in all the Days of the Year, equal that Exhibition, which, on any fair Sunday, inchants all thoſe who walk in our Park; which, in the Opinion of all Foreigners, as well as our own People, can boaſt ſuch an Aſſemblage of beautiful Women, as far ſurpaſſes whatever is to be ſeen in other Countries.

It is not meant by this Obſervation to depreciate the Women of France; to many of whom may be applied, without the leaſt Flattery, the Diſtich that Sapho aſcribes to herſelf,

Si mihi difficilis Formam Natura negavit,
Ingenio Formæ Damna rependo meæ.

If partial Nature has denied me Beauty, the Charms of my Mind amply make up for the Deficiency.

No

No Women upon Earth can excel, and few rival them in their almoſt native Arts of pleaſing all who approach them. Add to this, an Education beyond that of moſt European Ladies; a conſummate Skill in thoſe Accompliſhments that ſuit the Fair Sex; and the moſt graceful Manner of diſplaying that Knowledge to the utmoſt Advantage.

SUCH is the Deſcription that may ſafely be given of the French Ladies in general; happy, if the Spirit, or rather the evil Genius of Gallantry, did not too often pervert all theſe lovely Qualities, and render them ſubſervient to very iniquitous Ends.

HAPPY too it were, if we could remain mere Spectators of the Miſchiefs wherewith that evil Genius has ſo long afflicted France, and ſeems of late Years, more and more to threaten England. Hitherto our good Fortune has protected us from the ſcandalous Degree of the Contagion prevailing in that Nation. May as little of it as poſſible in the Nature of Things, find its Way into this Iſland, and may our fair Countrywomen ſtill merit and preſerve not only the Reputation of being the moſt beautiful of their Sex, but alſo that much nobler Praiſe, of being the moſt perfect and amiable Patterns of Modeſty; without which the Poſſeſſion of exterior Charms, is but an Encouragement to Infamy, and an Invitation to thoſe Exceſſes of Depravity that ſink human Nature to its loweſt Debaſement.

OF THE

ITALIANS.

THE Modern ITALIANS addict themſelves to the Theory of Politics, as much as their Anceſtors did to the Practice of War; no European Nation having produced a greater Number of political and hiſtorical Writers, many of them very worthy of Peruſal. And yet, whatever conſiderable Advancements have been made by Individuals in the Science of Government, we do not find their Countrymen much benefited by their Labours: Few Countries in Europe being worſe governed, and no People, in many Parts more wretched. There are but two States, if the ſecond of them deſerve the Name, Lucca, and St. Marino, where the Happineſs of the Community is properly conſulted. All the others are enſlaved either by Deſpotiſm or Ariſtocracy; both equally oppreſſive to their reſpective Subjects, and as jealous of, and ready to maintain Authority, by all the unwarrantable Arts of private Severity, as by the public avowed Methods of open Force.

HENCE, the Italians, though inferior to no People whatever in the native Endowments of Genius and Sagacity, are prevented from exerting them by the Fetters which the deſtructive Weight of undue Powers naturally throws on all the human Faculties. Senſe and Valour,

Valour, Numbers of them poſſeſs in an eminent Degree. Many of the moſt material Improvements in modern military Knowledge are due to them. Some of the greateſt Generals in later Ages, ſuch as a Spinola, a Montecuculi, and others, were born in this Country, as well as ſome of the greateſt Philoſophers, and moſt celebrated Profeſſors of Literature; and more, no doubt, would have been produced, if Superſtition on the one Hand, and Tyranny on the other, did not equally contribute to depreſs thoſe Abilities, which nothing but Freedom of Mind and Body can bring to Maturity.

SUCH is the Condition of Italy at this Day. Three Centuries ago it was the Scene of Reſurrection to every liberal Art. While the reſt of Europe was plunged in the Depth of Ignorance and Barbarity, polite Learning was cultivated here with the utmoſt Succeſs. So ſuperior were the Italians to all their European Neighbours, that they ſpoke of them as the Greeks and Romans were wont to do of all other Nations, by the Style and Appellation of Barbarians; and it was uſual in the epiſtolary Correſpondence of the Italian Literati at the Time, to mention Foreigners by ſcarce any other Name.

HOWEVER, to conſider Things impartially, it was more to their Situation, than to their own Efforts and Capacity, they owed this Revival of ancient Learning. Had not their Neighbours, the Greeks been driven by the Turkiſh Arms, and Conqueſts into Italy, and brought with them the only Property they had left, that of Books and Knowledge, the Italians might have

remained as illiterate and barbarous, as the Nations to whom they were ſo liberal of theſe Epithets.

With all theſe Acquiſitions, their Progreſs in Science was far from manly, and ſuch as could reflect Honour on its Adepts. Machiavel, who flouriſhed at that Period, gathered few Maxims out of the profound Erudition he was Maſter of, but ſuch as ought to procure Extermination to their Abettors. And though many of his Writings are excellent, it is principally when he aſſumes the Character of an Hiſtorian; for his Politics (it is notorious) are become a Term of Reproach to all their Advocates.

It muſt, however, be acknowledged that the Arts of modern Policy, originated from Italy; and though at firſt very imperfect and inhuman, many of them being founded on mere perſonal Self-Intereſt, yet, by Degrees, they were cleared of their groſſeſt, and moſt capital Errors; and were practiſed, not unſucceſsfully, in ſome of their republican States, eſpecially at Venice: where, during a long Period, the Burden of an Ariſtocracy was moderated by the Prudence and Lenity of ſome illuſtrious Individuals. The People grew rich and happy, through the Extenſiveneſs of their Trade, and the equitable Adminiſtration of their Rulers; And the State itſelf became ſo powerful, as to excite the Jealouſy of the principal Monarchs and Potentates in Europe; by whom a League was formed againſt them, much from the ſame Motive, as thoſe which induced Lewis the Fourteenth of France, to attack the Dutch; who, by an Imitation of the Example ſet them by the Venetians in the Methods of a diffuſive

ſive Commerce, and a wiſe Government, had attained to an equal Height of Proſperity, which gave riſe to a Degree of Envy that involved them in a like Storm of Danger.

Not long before this Period of the Revival of Letters, which happened about the Middle of the fifteenth Century, the Italians were become the Subject of univerſal Ridicule, by their extraordinary, and till then, unheard of Modes of carrying on War. When their petty Princes diſagreed (and they were almoſt always at Variance) they ſent forth Armies and Generals, whoſe Buſineſs was not to fight, but to meet peaceably, and adjuſt in a friendly Interview, how both Sides ſhould give Battle without Slaughter. This was no difficult Matter to ſettle; as the Officers and Soldiers of both Parties were Hirelings, no Ways animated with any of that Fury which national Antipathy creates and, whoſe only View was to make a Shew of Fighting. Thus, when drawn out in Array, they would mix in Combat without giving Blows; and they who were puſhed off the Field, were deemed to have loſt the Day. Sometimes, indeed, when Sieges were undertaken, it became neceſſary to make Uſe of Cannon; but they were only fired at Places the Beſiegers and the Beſieged had previouſly agreed upon; and one may well imagine, Care was taken no Body ſhould be in the Way of receiving Hurt. Neither were the Hours of Reſt and Relaxation forgotten. From Sun-ſet till Sun riſe, they enjoyed uninterrupted Repoſe; and on all Sundays and Holydays (of which there was, in that Age, a much greater Number than in the preſent) there

was a total Suſpenſion of all Hoſtilities, if this Word be applicable to ſuch Farces.

The Entrance of the Spaniards, French and Germans into Italy, put an End to thoſe pacific Meaſures. It obliged them to adopt another Syſtem, and to ſecond the Deſigns of the reſpective Nations, whoſe Cauſe they ſeverally eſpouſed, by following their Examples in the Proſecution of War; in which, to do them Juſtice, they ſoon became no leſs expert. Some of Charles the Fifth's beſt Troops and Commanders, were Italians.

In Return for their military Inſtructions, theſe Nations carried Home the Science of Craft and Diſſimulation; which, at that Time, was the Policy moſt in Vogue among the Italian Princes: And the Courts of Spain and France became the Seminary of thoſe Politicians who diſturbed their own Country, and all Europe, by Intrigues, the Drift of which was to promote Miſchief, and make their own Welfare conſiſt in the Misfortune of others.

But whatever Cenſure ſuch Politics may deſerve, it cannot be denied that we owe to the Ingenuity and Application of the Natives of Italy, the Invention and Reſtoration of many noble and uſeful Arts. They revived the Science and Skill of the Greeks and Romans in Architecture and Statuary, of which our Forefathers had no Ideas left; and which, in the Courſe of leſs than a Century, altered amazingly the Face of Europe, by filling it with magnificent Edifices, and by teaching Men to render their Dwellings equally elegant and comfortable.

comfortable. The Reſidence of the Great were formerly, little better than immenſe Dungeons, and thoſe of the lower Sort ſcarce any Thing above Huts; and their Accommodations were ſuitably groſs and rude.

To them we alſo are indebted for an Introduction of Taſte in Muſic and Painting. During the Succeſſion of many Centuries, they firſt had no other Rule but that of the Ear; while the ſecond was ſeldom employed but to darken Rooms and Churches by a Profuſion of ill fancied Repreſentations of Things and Perſons depicted on the Windows, the chief and almoſt only Merit of which conſiſted in the Livelineſs and Durability of the Colours. This delightful Art had not in thoſe unpoliſhed, illiberal Days, been applied to one of its moſt agreeable Uſes, that of tranſmitting to the View of Poſterity the Reſemblance of illuſtrious Perſonages, or of thoſe, an Origin from whom endears their Images to the Spectator.

The Renewal and Improvement of theſe valuable Branches of Knowledge, and the Diſcovery of ſeveral others of no leſs Utility, are undoubtedly Motives of juſt Pride; and were it for theſe alone, the Italians are intitled to the Reſpect and Gratitude of other Nations; but they have further Claims of a ſtill more important Nature: Excepting dramatic Performances, in which they have not hitherto made any conſiderable Proficiency, there is no Province in the whole Republic of Letters, wherein they have not led the Way to Excellence and Perfection. What is particularly worth remarking, they have produced two of the three nobleſt modern Epic Poets, Arioſto, Taſſo, and Milton, who

certainly have not their Equals in any European Nation. But their Genius ſeems moſt in its true Element, when employed in Hiſtory; in this Kind of Writing as complete Productions have flown from ſome of their Pens, as any Country of old or later Times can boaſt.

But though the Reſtoration of polite Learning is due to the Italians, yet the Diſciples they made, in Proceſs of Time, outſtripped their Maſters; and in the Courſe of an Age, after the Reformation, England, France, and Germany were incomparably more fertile in Men of claſſical, and indeed all other Kind of Erudition than Italy.

About the Middle of the laſt Century, the Cultivation of the Greek and Roman Literature, and of all Manner of liberal Knowledge began greatly to decline among the Italians; and was at the Commencement of the preſent ſo prodigiouſly neglected, that a moſt ignominious Unſkilfulneſs, not to ſay a downright abſolute Ignorance, became general among thoſe, who by their Birth and Profeſſion, ought to have been converſant in Books and intellectual Acquirements: A Complaint often made by the celebrated Cardinal Polignac (deputed about this Time by the Court of France to that of Rome) and who had frequent Opportunities of diſcovering their ſhameful Deficiency in theſe Reſpects.

Even Architecture, Painting and Sculpture partook of the Decay; and the Spirit of theſe noble Arts ſeemed to have emigrated to France, which in the Reign of Lewis the Fourteenth gained a Superiority therein which it ſtill preſerves.

THE Motives that now induce Foreigners to visit Italy are not the Performances of the present, so much as those of its former Artists; many Parts of Europe affording Men of equal, if not greater Abilities in those Professions than any it produces at this Day.

MUSIC remains, at this Period, the only Department of Genius wherein the Italians incontestably excel all other Nations; this is owing to the innumerable Churches and Chapels, to which Revenues are annexed for the Maintenance of Choirs; a Consideration that engages so many Parents to educate their Children in a Manner that may qualify them for Admittance.

THAT Part of the Italian Nation which inhabits the Country, where formerly flourished the most renowned of its Ancestors, is, by a sad Reverse of Things, become the Residence of the most degenerate of their Descendants. It is principally at Rome we find the fewest Traces of the heroic Character of the ancient Romans. Valour, Eloquence, and the Spirit of Liberty, the three Pillars on which they erected the immense Edifice of their Power and Glory, are, in a Manner, trampled upon in modern Rome; where Ignorance, Idleness, and Pusillanimity lord it over the Minds of the present Race, with very few Instances of Exception.

THE sole Inheritance they have derived from the old Romans is precisely that Portion of their Character which made them ridiculous and despicable, the Genius of Superstition, that infects whatever relates to the practical Part of their Religion; which, exclusive of the Absurdity of many of its Tenets, is here held out to the Multitude as a Matter of Pastime and Amuse-

ment,

ment, and ſerves to fill up the many Hours of Vacancy and Leiſure reſulting from a general Inactivity of Life. Theſe Exhibitions of eccleſiaſtical Pageantry ſeem perfectly calculated to engroſs the Attention of the Crowd, nor leſs adapted to the Taſte of the numerous Actors, who perform the many various Parts aſſigned them with remarkable Expertneſs and Alacrity; indeed, ſome of the firſt Members of the Community are occaſionally proud of making a capital Appearance in them.

While immerſed in theſe prepoſterous Occupations, and thence juſtly become the Deriſion of Europe, they yet retain the Stile of that triumphant People before whom the Nations trembled. The S. P. Q. R. is inſcribed or carved on every Monument to which the Public has contributed; and there ſtill ſubſiſts among them an Aſſembly that calls itſelf the Senate.

After recording theſe Proofs of Vanity, no Body will wonder that they ſhould not unfrequently aſſume Airs of Importance and Majeſty, and ſpeak of themſelves as if they were the adequate Repreſentatives of the People whoſe Name they have inherited.

The Grandees at Rome, the Majority of whom are Eccleſiaſtics, may juſtly be reputed the moſt unhappy Perſons of their Rank. The Tax they pay for Greatneſs far exceeds its Worth; and they are continually deprived of the moſt eſſential Comforts of Life by the Conſtraint and regulated Forms of Pride that accompany their moſt inſignificant Actions, as well as by the ſtudied Solemnity without which they are cautious never to expoſe themſelves to the Eye of the World.

The

THE ruling Paſſion that actuates them all is a Love of Pomp and Oſtentation, which helps as much, or more than any other Cauſe, to conſume their Revenues; but this they readily ſubmit to from a Conſciouſneſs of the Admiration and Applauſe a Diſplay of exterior Grandeur and Magnificence commands from the Public; whoſe principal Favourites in this Country are thoſe who regale their Sight with Gawdineſs and Finery.

As they ſet the Example, ſo they are cloſely copied by the inferior Nobility and Gentry, in a reſerved, unſociable Diſpoſition, that induces them to avoid much reciprocal Intercourſe, and ſtudiouſly to keep aloof, as it were, from that Sort of Feſtivity which conſiſts in a Frankneſs and Hilarity of Manners. No People in Europe are leſs acquainted with what is called good Fellowſhip; to which their Averſion ariſes partly from the general Narrowneſs of their Circumſtances, and partly from their exceſſive Oeconomy, not to call it Niggardlineſs, in every Kind of Expence, but that of Equipage; the only Article, together with its Appurtenances of Dreſs and Liveries, on which they are apt to be laviſh. Their chief Entertainment is to parade in their Coaches abroad, while the utmoſt Parſimoniouſneſs reſtrains them at Home from that good Cheer and convivial Merriment, which in other Countries, render domeſtic Enjoyments the moſt valuable and attractive. But of theſe they know ſcarce any Thing more than dry unintereſting Converſations wherein their natural Cautiouſneſs preſides with ſo very oppreſſive an Influence, that, as whatever is ſaid in thoſe

Meetings

Meetings is, by the Circumſpection, or rather Timidity of the Speaker, carefully calculated to give no Sort of Offence either to Individuals, or to the Government, the ſame Depreſſion of Mind deters them from launching into any Subject worthy the Attention of any Audience whatever.

THE Clergy have made this Part of Italy, their Seat of Empire; and compoſe a monſtrous Proportion of the Inhabitants, not only at Rome, but throughout the whole Eccleſiaſtical State, as the Pope's Dominions are very pertinently called. Whatever relates to Government, civil, as well as religious, is veſted in the Hands of the Prieſts: A Race of Mortals who ſeem here to be conſidered as the only Beings fit to manage and direct all Affairs, unleſs it be thoſe of the military Liſt; wherein, however, if they do not aſſume the executive, they fully arrogate the directive Part. Few Employments of any Dignity or Importance, are out of their Poſſeſſion; and if we except the illuſtrious Houſe of the Colonnas, (which claims the Station of High Conſtable by Inheritance) there is not, perhaps, one noble Family, a Lay-Member of which is decorated with any Poſt of prime Eminence. Such is the Reverence the Clergy have had the Dexterity to propagate throughout all Claſſes of Men for their Order, that the higheſt Pinnacle of Honour and Ambition is to be conſiderable among them; and attain to the Preferments reſerved for thoſe only who belong to their Body. No Family eſteems itſelf ſo truly diſtinguiſhed and conſpicuous, as when ſome Individual of it is a Member of the ſacred College;

the

the Title given collectively to thoſe whoſe Perſons are known by the Name of Cardinals. This Appellation, in the Ears of a modern Roman, ſounds as lofty as that of *Imperator* did among the Ancient. And, as the Wiſhes and Endeavours of theſe aimed at meriting that Salutation from the Legions, the others are no leſs eager and indefatigable, and ſpare neither Pains nor Purſe in procuring that Diſtinction from the papal Court; where the Spirit of Venality reigns with a Boldneſs and Uncontrol not exceeded, perhaps, even in our electioneering Scenes in England; between which and thoſe of the Vatican, the ſole Diſparity conſiſts in the ſmaller Number of the bribed, and the leſs noiſy and tumultuous Methods of Corruption.

Such are, in general, the Romans of this Day; and though ſome Particulars of this Deſcription are not unapplicable to the other Italians, yet they ſuit with more Propriety the Character of the former, who ſeem to be the moſt remarkable for thoſe Peculiarities that diſtinguiſh their Countrymen from other Nations.

Italy contains an amazing Multitude of idle, and therefore needy Wretches, uninſtructed in any lawful Calling, unprincipled in their Morals, and glad to embrace any Mode of Living that will exempt them from Labour. Hence the prodigious Numbers of Hangers-on about the Gates of Convents and Monaſteries; the Offals of whoſe Tables are, at ſtated Times, beſtowed on the Crowds of Beggars that lie in wait for them with an Avidity that muſt convince every Spectator how little elſe they have to depend on for their Subſiſtence. Hence too, the Reſpect of the Populace for the various

various Orders of Friars, Monks, and other Religious, of the many Denominations that fill this Country; who are, at the ſame Time, to the great Detriment of Society, poſſeſſed of another Means to make themſelves revered by the vileſt Dregs of the Mob, the ſhelter they afford to Malefactors, who are always ſure of finding an Aſylum in their Cloiſters, or Churches, or even on the very Threſhold of theſe, and indeed, of all Churches in moſt Parts of Italy.

This Cuſtom of rendering Places conſecrated to the Purpoſes of Virtue and Religion, a Sanctuary to Crimes of the blackeſt Dye, is the more to be execrated, and ought to meet with leſs Toleration in Italy than elſewhere, from the Temper and Diſpoſition of the Natives, which is violent and fiery to an Exceſs, that renders Homicides and Aſſaſſinations almoſt trivial Occurrences, and too deplorably familiariſes Mankind with the Enormity of ſuch Deeds, by their ſhockingly frequent Repetition.

And yet, notwithſtanding the Ferocity and bloody Mindedneſs, which the Perpetration of ſuch Wickedneſs muſt naturally preſuppoſe in the Guilty, when ſeized and brought to Puniſhment (which, however, rarely happens, from the infamous Supineneſs of the Legiſlature in general throughout Italy) they turn out the moſt daſtardly of Mortals; and with ſuch Horrors does the Idea of Death preſent itſelf to their Apprehenſions, that moſt of them can ſcarce be deemed alive at the Place of Execution. Widely different in this, from our Malefactors in England, who generally ſubmit to the Decrees of Juſtice, with a Firmneſs and Intrepidity

dity worthy of a better Cauſe than that for which they ſuffer.

NEITHER the French nor the Spaniards, are ſubject to that Exceſs of ſuperſtitious Debility which ſo glaringly characteriſes moſt of the Italians; who, whenever they think their Life in Danger, in the Fright and Deſpondency of their Imagination, have immediate Recourſe to all thoſe Methods of Support and Conſolation with which their Religion is ſo amply provided; and apply with much more ſeeming Eagerneſs and Confidence than the Individuals of thoſe two Nations, to the Protection of Maſſes, Relics, Saints, and every other ſimilar Aſſiſtance recommended by their Perſuaſion.

HENCE we frequently meet in Italy with Scenes that remind one of the ſtrange Behaviour of a dying King of France, Lewis the Eleventh, a Prince of a very odious Character, and whoſe Memory is abhorred even in his own Country. This Monarch, who was a Mixture of Bigotry and Deceit during his whole Reign, made an End perfectly conſiſtent with the Tenour of his paſt Conduct; and his Life and Death were all of a-piece. When he found his Diſſolution approaching, and that all human Remedies were fruitleſs, he ordered his Bed to be ſurrounded with Shrines containing the Remains of thoſe Saints in whoſe Patronage he moſt confided; hoping thereby, either to retard the Stroke of Death; or, what is more probable, to render its Conſequence leſs dreadful than his Conſcience told him he was liable to, by the Power and Efficacy of their Interceſſion in his Behalf.

FROM

From this Paſſage, and others of the like Nature, though not marked with an equal Degree of Infatuation, an Inference may be drawn not favourable to the Romiſh Cauſe; which is, that from the Multiplicity of theſe imaginary Helps, a Man is often led to place too ſettled a Reliance on them; and to imagine that, from the Concurrence of ſo many Expedients, his Caſe, be it ever ſo bad, can never become deſperate; and, if ſuch an Expreſſion may be permitted on ſo ſerious a Subject, that let his Offences have been ever ſo heinous, he cannot fail of a Reprieve, through the Solicitations of ſo many Friends and Patrons. Hence he continues in his flagitious Career, unreſtrained by thoſe Terrors which his credulous Fancy has found Means to ſoften or remove.

But of all the Inſtances (and many might be cited) that inconteſtably ſhew how intimately a ſuperſtitious Diſpoſition may be reconciled and blended in the human Mind, with the moſt atrocious Profligacy, none is ſtronger than what is related of that Catiline of his Day, the infamouſly celebrated Borgia; who, though ſullied with a Complication of the moſt horrible Crimes, and while his Conſcience ſtaggered, as it were, under an accumulated Load of Guilt, had yet the Aſſurance to provide himſelf with what the Romaniſts call an Abſolution *in Articulo Mortis*, at the Point of Death: This one would ſuppoſe they look upon as a Paſſport againſt which no Exception can be taken; and that intitles the Poſſeſſor to all Manner of Favour.

Though both theſe Examples of a cloſe Alliance between Depravity and Superſtition were previous to that

that enlightened Æra which followed the Re-eſtabliſhment of Letters, and border upon, if not belong to the darker Ages, yet there are ſtill many Remains of theſe Abſurdities among thoſe of the Romiſh Perſuaſion; eſpecially in Italy, Spain, and Portugal, the three moſt bigotted Countries of any that hold Communion with the See of Rome.

The Pomp of Eccleſiaſtics far exceeds that of other Perſons of Diſtinction in moſt Parts of Italy; eſpecially in the Pope's Territories, where they have ſome ſpecial Privileges annexed to the Diſplay of their Grandeur, which other People, however their Means might afford it, are not admitted to the Participation of; ſuch as the Number of their Gentlemen Retainers, Liverymen, Equipages, Horſes, and the like. Precedence is given them every where with the moſt chearful Readineſs, and without the leaſt Degree of Reluctance in any Perſons whatever. Thus, if a Layman's Equipage ſhould meet that of a dignified Clergyman, the former is to give Way, after making the latter ſome very ſubmiſſive Compliment; and if the Clergyman in travelling ſhould arrive at an Inn later than the other, the Layman would not dare continue in Poſſeſſion of the beſt Rooms, but immediately give them up to him. All this is done without the leaſt repining; and ſuch is the almoſt native Awe (for it is inculcated in their very Infancy) they all ſtand in of Eccleſiaſtics, that they never think they have done enough to teſtify their Complaiſance towards them; and whatever Liberties theſe might take, from the Conſciouſneſs of their Superiority of Power and Credit, thoſe would not ſeem to perceive, much leſs bethink themſelves of reſenting it.

But to do Juſtice to the Italian Eccleſiaſtics, they are very far from ſeeking Occaſions of exerting their Authority; on the contrary, their Behaviour is mild and affable in a peculiar Degree, and it would be wronging them eſſentially, not to acknowledge that they are much more deſirous of commanding Veneration than Fear. Such, in general, is the Character of the higher Ranks of Clergymen in Italy, whoſe obliging Deportment to Strangers of a decent Appearance, the Engliſh particularly, ought not to be forgotten. Tho' they look upon us as Heretics, they treat us with a Politeneſs and Humanity which plainly evince religious Animoſity is in a Manner obliterated among them, and has given Way to a Spirit of Civilization and Urbanity. Of this our Countrymen (when they deſerve it) have abundant Proofs in the Eſteem and Conſideration they experince from thoſe Gentlemen; who ſeem to pay them a more than common Attention, by preferably inviting them to their Houſes and Converſations, and admitting them to their Familiarity, and almoſt to their Intimacy. Favours which they are not ſo ready to confer upon other Foreigners.

The inferior Clergy follow the laudable Examples of their Superiors, and are equally civil and condeſcending. Never meddling with Matters from which they are ſenſible nothing but Odium will accrue, and interfering only where they know their Mediation will be welcome and effectual.

By ſuch Arts as theſe the Clergy in Italy are become ſo predominantly reſpected. Nor can any Thing be more erroneous than the Notions that prevail among

the uninformed, of their being a haughty, ſupercilious Generation, ever buſied in Oppreſſion, and glorying, as it were, in the Manifeſtation of the unbounded Power they enjoy over the Minds, Perſons, and Fortunes of the Laity.

The regular Clergy, conſiſting of the various cenobitical Orders, whether Mendicants, or poſſeſſed of Lands and Eſtates, is ſo called in Contradiſtinction to the Secular, who live abroad in the World, and are each his own Maſter; while the former are bound by many Reſtrictions, and dwell together collegiately under the Direction of a Superior, whoſe Temper and Way of Thinking decide in a great Meaſure of their Happineſs or Miſery. The Lives they lead are commonly very edifying: Though much Learning is not found among them, they, now and then, produce Men of Abilities, and many of them excel in thoſe Branches of manual Ingenuity that are the Fruits of great Leiſure and great Pains. Abundance of curious Pieces of Workmanſhip proceed from their Hands; and Carving, Sculpture, and Painting flouriſh, in no ſecondary Degree, in ſeveral of theſe Monaſtic Retreats; chiefly among thoſe whom they call Lay-Brothers, a Kind of Menials in the Convents. Theſe being uſually Perſons of low Birth, and of no liberal Education, are allowed by their Statutes to practiſe the Trades and handicraft Occupations they were bred to, for the Service of the Community. Whence ſuch of them as have a Turn for any of the aforeſaid Arts, are indulged in the Cultivation of them, and often become very great Proficients.

ITALY abounds beyond all other Romiſh Countries, with Shrines, Relics, Statues and Pictures of no ſmall Fame in the Operation of wonderful Events. Their miraculous Madonas eſpecially are known every where. We Proteſtants are very apt to tax the Prieſts and Friars with Artifice and Juggling, in order to deceive the ignorant and credulous; and probably the Accuſation is partly true. But it is no leſs certain, that the Majority of the Prieſts and Friars themſelves as firmly believe the Stories they deal out to the Commonalty, as the moſt ſimple Part of their Audience. Tales of the Apparitions of heavenly or infernal Spirits, of Saints, of Ghoſts, and of other ſupernatural Tranſactions, attended with particular, and much inſiſted on Details, of Time and Place, with every Circumſtance to give Weight to the Relation, are as much in Vogue among the Clergy, as among the Laity.

THE Behaviour of the Italians in their Churches is truly theatrical, and the numberleſs Geſtures that accompany their Devotions ſtrongly denote the internal Agitation of Men fully perſuaded of the Rectitude and Neceſſity of what they are about. The Variety and Efforts of Geſticulation in many of their Preachers are amazing, and far exceed even the dramatical Vehemence of a French Actor. An Italian, when holding forth, often knows not where to ſtop; and though he contains himſelf within his Pulpit, which, however, is made large enough to admit of great Motion and Activity, yet his Body appears in a Sort of Confinement, from which one would imagine, he is endeavouring every Moment to break. His Soul ſeems poſſeſſed with Hope or Fear, Grief or Joy, Horror and Shame, or Serenity

Serenity and Content, juſt as he thinks the Subject of his Diſcourſe requires that he ſhould throw himſelf into the various Aſpects and Attitudes correſponding with thoſe different Paſſions. This, in Italy, is called Eloquence; and far from exciting Laughter and Contempt, or appearing in the leaſt unnatural and affected, ſuch a Method of Preaching is ſo well adapted to the Diſpoſition of the Auditors, that Tears are drawn, or Countenances cheared, and Proofs of Sympathy with the Feelings of the Speaker are abundantly given by the almoſt unanimous Concomitance of the whole Aſſembly.

If ſacred Oratory be on ſuch a Footing in Italy, well may they in prophane Matters carry their Violence of Action ſtill farther. This they do, in ſome Places, to an Exceſs almoſt incredible to thoſe who have not been Eye-Witneſſes of it. The only appoſite Method of conveying an Idea of ſome of the Italian Modes of pleading at the Bar, is to imagine Harlequin, Punch, and Pantaloon at high Words together. There is not a Geſture, a Contorſion, or a Grimace of Body, Limbs, or Viſage, unexhibited on theſe Occaſions; and as they are not circumſcribed by a Pulpit, there is no Limitation to their Agility and Excurſions, but that of the Hall they plead in.

The Article of Travelling is a very diſcouraging one, in many Parts of Italy; their Inns being, with very few Exceptions, the Seats of Inconvenience, Poverty, and Wretchedneſs in their moſt diſagreeable Extremes; and what is remarkable, they principally deſerve this Stigma in thoſe Diſtricts where a Traveller's Curioſity is principally intereſted, the Countries in the Vicinity

of Rome and Naples; where the moſt valuable Monuments of Antiquity are found in the greateſt Number.

To ſpeak Truth, Cleanlineſs is not a very common Qualification among the Italians: Neither private nor public Houſes have any Cauſe to boaſt on that Account. Nay, there are Samples of Dirtineſs too nauſeous to mention, and theſe ſuffered in the Palaces, and in the very Preſence of their firſt Perſonages.

The Furniture of their nobleſt Rooms is often ſhabby, old-faſhioned, or ragged; and were it not for Pictures and Statues, the interior Parts of ſome, if not moſt, of their grandeſt Dwellings would not deſerve Inſpection. It is chiefly the Architecture alone that recommends all their Buildings, and even there it is only the Out-ſide we can admire. They underſtand nothing of the commodious Diſtribution of the Apartments; an Object much better conſulted in France, and ſtill more attended to in England.

It cannot, in ſhort, be diſſembled that the Part of the grand Tour which is performed in Italy is very irkſome to all who are not deeply enamoured with Muſic, and the three Siſter Arts of Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting. They who ſeek other Sources of Pleaſure here will find themſelves greatly diſappointed. Their public Diverſions are not of the Kind that pleaſe an Engliſh or a French Palate, which require ſomething more than what gratifies the mere Sight or Hearing. This is too empty, and too futile an Enjoyment for thoſe who have been uſed to the elegant Recreation: of the Stage in England, and in France; the only Coun-

tries

tries where they are conducted with Judgment and Propriety, and form a rational and a gentlemanly Relaxation.

In Italy, the Stage is yet in a State of Imperfection that ought to cover with Shame a People who poſſeſſed the Means of improving it ſo long before the Reſt of Europe; and who therefore, ought, ere now, to have brought it to the higheſt Degree of Perfection. But this is ſo very far from being the Caſe, that even the uſual received Notions of common Senſe and Decency are baniſhed from the Generality of their theatrical Paſtimes; while the loweſt Buffoonery, ſuch as the meaneſt Rabble only can digeſt elſewhere, is what they give the Name of Comedy to.

Their Operas, indeed, make ſome Amends. But when we reflect how few they have whoſe Merit is not confined to the Muſic, and that the poetical Part, in moſt of them, is the Height of Bombaſt, and intolerable to a Reader of any Taſte, can a judicious Engliſh or French Spectator forbear entertaining a ſecret Contempt for ſo manifeſt a Depravity of Taſte? and inwardly congratulating himſelf on the ſuperior Excellence of his Countrymen in one of the moſt uſeful of all Inventions in genteel Life, that of reconciling Pleaſure with Inſtruction, and of turning to a laudable Account the many Hours which the Italians murder in the Encouragement and Countenance given to their wretched Farces by many even of thoſe who would eſteem themſelves injured to be claſſed with the Commonalty.

But the Loſs of Time is not the worſt Conſequence of theſe deſpicable Amuſements; they have a much more pernicious Influence on the Diſpoſition and Manners of the People than ſeems to be ſuſpected, by nouriſhing a Frivolouſneſs of Mind viſible in the Diſcourſes even of the better Sort; which ſeldom afford thoſe vigorous Sallies of a well-cultivated Imagination, ſupported by an equal Strength of Reaſoning and Expreſſion, that animate the Converſations of Perſons of the ſame Rank in ſome other Countries; but are repleniſhed with a Variety of what they call Concetti; a Kind of Wit very current in Italy, and thought a Refinement of which none but a quick and fertile Fancy is capable: The French however, very uncomplaiſantly (as the Italians ſay) call them *Penſées fauſſes*, wrong-headed Thoughts; and we blunt Engliſhmen, are pleaſed, without Ceremony, to ſtile them downright Nonſenſe. Of this Species of Wit a Definition is not neceſſary to thoſe who have peruſed the Medleys of Harmony and Abſurdity imported hither from Italy, and acted with ſuch Applauſe: Concettis form the very Soul and Spirit of theſe Compoſitions; the only Purport of which is to link together a Set of ſoft, ſweet ſounding Phraſes, whoſe Drift and Meaning are almoſt unintelligible; but which have the never-failing Power of charming the Ears of the Many; who, in favour of that agreeable Modulation which generally accompanies a Performance void of Senſe and Energy, ſeem very willing to diſpenſe with theſe Ingredients, and with whatever elſe might conduce to give it a ſolid intrinſic Merit.

THERE exiſts in Italy a Species of Beings unknown throughout the Reſt of Europe; who, though their Riſe be not remotely diſtant, have wrought a Change in the Temper and Manners of the Italians, that renders them, in ſome Reſpects, a People totally different from what they were a Century ago. Theſe Beings are well known by the Name of Ciciſbeys, and may be conſidered in the Light of Aſſiſtants and Subſtitutes to thoſe Men of Faſhion who have entered into the matrimonial State, and whoſe fair Partners require more Attendance than they are willing, or than their Occupations and Affairs will allow them to give. This Inſtitution appears an admirable Relief to thoſe young Gentlemen who are afraid, from ſundry Motives, to venture on a Wife; and yet are unwilling to renounce the ſoft Amuſements reſulting from the Society of a female Companion.

HENCE, at firſt Sight, this Employment of a Ciciſbey may ſeem delightful to Perſons of a diſſolute and libertine Diſpoſition; but many a one that ſought it with all the Eagerneſs of Inexperience, has heartily rued the Day of his Admiſſion to a Servitude, which robs him of every Moment of his Liberty, and gives the Lady, under whoſe Banners he has liſted himſelf, an abſolute Command of his Perſon, his Time, his Means, his Credit, and whatever he can call his own. An Italian Woman knows no Reſerves; and he that pretends to her good Graces muſt diveſt himſelf of his Will and Paſſions, and make an entire Sacrifice of them to her Caprice. Thus a Ciciſbey is a perfect Slave: and tho' no Favours are denied him, yet the Price he pays is far

beyond

beyond the Value he receives, when we reflect that he barters for it the Peace of his Mind, and the Proſperity of his Circumſtances; as it happens not unfrequently that Advancements in Life are retarded, and ſometimes totally fruſtrated, through the Impediments thrown in the Way of Activity, by the Aſſiduouſneſs a Lady inſiſts upon from him, who, by the fatal Office he has accepted, has bound himſelf to a perpetual Attendance upon her.

But if ſuch a Connection, viewed only in a Light of Pleaſure and Gallantry, is ſo undeſirable, ſo very far from anſwering the Expectations even of the Man of mere Pleaſure; it ſtill diſplays a more ſhocking Picture, when we examine it according to the Rules of Morality; as it radically deſtroys the very firſt Principles whereon the reciprocal Happineſs of the Sexes is founded; by introducing into the wedded State, not a bare Indifference, but a mutual Contempt and Averſion the more violent for being ſuppreſſed; tho' ſufficiently manifeſted by the univerſal Eſtrangement of the Parties concerned from each other's Purſuits and Occupations, and the Neglect of a Progeny, for which only one of the Parents can be be ſuppoſed to entertain any Feeling.

Such is the Delineation, and ſuch the Effects of Ciciſbeiſm, the moſt deteſtable of all thoſe Enormities, that Faſhion authoriſes in Europe. A Cuſtom the more deſerving of Surpriſe, as the Country where it prevails was formerly remarkable for Inclinations and Manners that beſpoke, as it were, an everlaſting Impoſſibility of its Reception among the Natives; whoſe jealous

lous Diſpoſition was, at that Time, one of their moſt diſtinguiſhing Characteriſtics. But, as if it had been pre-ordained as a Proof that any Exceſs hardly ever fails to beget another of a contrary Tendency, they are now fallen into the other Extreme, and the moſt outrageous Jealouſy has at laſt ſubſided into the moſt ſupine Careleſſneſs and Unconcern about the Behaviour and Conduct of their Wives.

THE Italian Women are far preferable to the French in Point of exterior Charms, but their Education is, in general, moſt ſcandalouſly neglected; and thoſe Accompliſhments that render the Ladies in Englnnd and in France ſo acceptable in Company, are but rarely found among the Italians, who depend chiefly on their native Subtlety and Fineſſe, to ingratiate themſelves with ſuch as they deem worthy their Notice; of which they ſeldom beſtow any conſiderable Portion on any but their own Countrymen, ſeeming rather inclined to undervalue Foreigners, whoſe Downrightneſs and frank ingenuous Temper is not much the Subject of their Admiration; as it but ill correſponds with that Craft and Cunning which accompanies all their own Actions and Diſcourſes, and throws an Air of Myſteriouſneſs on the whole Tenour of their Conduct. Little, however, is loſt by the Refuſal of their Smiles, as the moſt a Stranger can propoſe to obtain is a tranſitory Courſe of Favours, the Remembrance of which cannot fail to hurt his Pride from the Conſideration of their Intereſtedneſs.

LOVE,

Love, in Italy, meets with very ſmall Encouragement from the great. That innocent, pure, and ſentimental Paſſion, which the Sanction of ſtricteſt Virtue authoriſes, is almoſt obliterated among them. The ſordid Motives, which to the Diſgrace of moſt Nations, have ſo much undue Influence over them in their matrimonial Connections, are ſtill much more infamouſly prevalent among the Nobility and Gentry of Italy.

An Italian Female of Birth and Fortune, bred in the Priſon of a Cloyſter, is brought forth, when marriageable, to receive her Sentence, and conducted like a Victim to the Altar, there to be made a Sacrifice to the Man of whom ſhe hardly knows the Face. None of thoſe antecedent Homages of a Lover, none of thoſe engaging Proofs of Attachment, which only can ſecure a Reciprocation. In ſhort, no Medium of Courtſhip intervenes, and therefore no Opportunity is given to create an Affection on either Side. Hence their nuptial Alliances are the Foundation of that Infamy and Scandal above deſcribed.

This is no untrue Repreſentation of the uſual Proceedings in theſe Matters among the faſhionable People in Italy; which from this Cauſe, has little to pride itſelf in the Character of its Women of Quality; the major Part of whom, whatever native Excellencies they may be endowed with, are by this cruel Treatment of their Perſons, in the moſt material Buſineſs of their Lives, debarred in a Manner of all Incitements to diſplay them; and as if in Revenge for this barbarous

Exertion

Exertion of parental Authority, this contemptuous unworthy Uſage of their Sex, ſeem determined to verify by their Behaviour the mean Opinion ſo unjuſtly and ſo fatally entertained of it by the other.

THERE is not any Nation, the Chineſe perhaps excepted, more amazingly infatuated with the Love of high and mighty Appellations, than the Italians; who may with great Truth, be ſaid to have given Riſe to thoſe many titular Qualifications by which the various Ranks and Stations in the modern Society are diſtinguiſhed.

As the Court of Rome was for Ages the Center of Negotiations on Subjects of the moſt univerſal Importance to all Europe, and was eſteemed, at the ſame Time, the ſupreme Seat of Authority in many temporal, as well as ſpiritual Matters in this Part of the World, it conſequently was copied, as a prime Model, by all the other Courts of Chriſtendom. Thus the many ceremonious Forms and Phraſes, with which it loaded the Tranſaction of Buſineſs, became of Courſe a univerſal Precedent; and the nominal Honours its Policy ſo liberally annexed to the mention of all thoſe from whom any ample Retribution was expected, were adopted and imitated by other States. Hence originally emanated that Profuſion of Epithets importive of perſonal Dignity, which Cuſtom has now made ſo current throughout all Europe.

IT was no Wonder that illiterate Nations ſhould have been been fond of deriving their Notions and Inſtitutions from the Italians, who were in thoſe Days

Days fully qualified to be their Preceptors, and whom their moſt ſtudious Individuals were wont to viſit from that Motive, much in the ſame Manner as many of the Sages of Antiquity travelled into Ægypt for Improvement.

But now that real Learning and Politeneſs are ſo generally diffuſed, it is ſurprizing that an enlightened World ſhould not have yet caſt off theſe Remains of Ignorance and ill Taſte, and reſtored that unaffected Propriety in the Modes of Speech and Intercourſe, for which the Ancients are with ſo much reaſon admired.

This leads one naturally to remark that there is not perhaps a more ſtriking Difference between the ancient and modern Inhabitants of Italy, than the Vanity and Fulſomneſs of theſe in their Titles and honorary Denominations, and the Plainneſs and Simplicity of the former; who in the moſt glittering Periods of their State, were content with the bare Mention of their Names, and of the Offices they bore, and ſeem to have been utter Strangers to any inſignificant Additions, as well as to that prepoſterous Multiplicity of complimental Expreſſions, which now, through the Right of Preſcription, claim ſo inelegant an Admittance both into Correſpondence and Diſcourſe.

In Italy, not only the reſpectable Parts of Society are poſſeſſed of certain verbal Appendages, which it would be rude and affrontive to retrench from their Names, whenever they are committed to Paper; but even thoſe Trades and Occupations, which, though honeſt

honeſt and neceſſary, are ſtill of the low and menial Kind, have alſo a Liſt of Adjectives to precede, and as it were, to uſher in with Decency their Perſons and Profeſſions.

THIS oſtentatious Diſpoſition in the Italians induces no few of them to avail themſelves of the moſt trivial Inſignia of Vanity; ſuch for Example as being called after the moſt famous of the Roman Heroes: We ſometimes hear of a Family, not one Male of which is leſs than a Scipio, a Mark Antony, a Pompey or a Cæſar.

A LIKE Spirit of Self-Flattery prompts others to indulge themſelves in the moſt groundleſs Conceit of a Deſcent from ſome of the moſt illuſtrious Houſes in old Rome; and happy is he who by the Similitude of his Family Name, can vamp up the leaſt Claim of this Nature.

THE modern Romans are alert on theſe Occaſions; nay ſo infatuated are they with a Perſuaſion that more of that heroic Blood runs in their Veins than the World is aware of, that not many Years ago in a ſeditious gathering of the Populace, their Ringleaders animated them with this very Notion; and loudly aſſerted that nothing but Opportunities were wanting to prove they were by no means degenerated.

SUCH Pretenſions, ridiculous as they may appear, are not viewed in that Light even by many of the better Sort, who ſeem very unwilling to be convinced that the Reſolution of the ancient Romans is quite extinct in

their

their pretended Poſterity; and, as an Argument of its ſtill ſubſiſting, often quote, with a triumphant Pleaſure, the bold Steps taken during the War for the Succeſſion to the Crown of Spain; when the Members of the Court of Rome, relying on the Alacrity that appeared in all their Subjects to ſecond the Meaſures they were projecting, dared become the principal Oppoſers of the Juriſdiction claimed by the German Emperors in Italy; and though abandoned by their Neighbours, nevertheleſs perſiſted, however unſucceſsfully, in their Efforts to prevent the Court of Vienna, in the Perſon of its chief, the Emperor Joſeph (an ambitious an enterprifing Prince) from domineering in the arbitrary Manner that is remembered by the Italians with ſo much Bitterneſs to this Hour.

Hence, Numbers of the preſent Roman Nobility are Perſons of no ſmall Pride; ſtill confiding in the Poſſibility of reviving the dormant Spirt (as they are pleaſed to ſtile it) of former Ages; and that the Day will come, when their Freedom and Dignity may be recalled on the Scene. They went farther in the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century than bare Surmiſes: Pope Julius, an intrepid and warlike Prince, had much ado to reſtrain them. And in the Reigns of ſome of the preceding Pontiffs, the People of Rome were ſo ungovernable, that the papal Court, for above half a Century, choſe to reſide at a Diſtance, not daring to truſt itſelf in that then tumultuous City.

They are however, much altered ſince that Æra; and are now very ſubmiſſively obedient to the Government.

ment. This too is the Caſe with the People throughout all the States and Principalities of Italy; the Sovereigns of which, though not over much revered by their Subjects, are ſeldom or never neceſſitated to enforce their Authority by violent Means.

NOTHING ſhews more convincingly the Indifference of the Generality of Italians, with Reſpect to their Maſters, than their Behaviour under the frequent Changes and Revolutions that have tranſmitted the Sovereignty of ſeveral Parts of their Country through ſo many rival Houſes ſucceſſively. It is remarkable that while the Conteſt laſted, they have ſtood aloof, and given themſelves but little Concern about the different Pretenders; holding it doubtleſs immaterial by whom they were ruled, and fully determined to avoid, as much as they could, involving themſelves in Blood and Deſolation, from the ſole Motive of Family Zeal. Few Italians draw their Swords in ſuch Quarrels at this Day. The Diſputes that have lately happened in their Country, for the Right of Dominion, have been chiefly maintained by foreign Powers, whom Conſanguinity or political Connections intereſted in the Support of the various Claimants; the Individuals of the Countries contended for interfering no further than private Views of Gain or Ambition might actuate them to eſpouſe the Cauſe of either Party.

THIS Unconcern, or rather abſolute Diſregard for the Perſons of their Princes and Rulers, is very much diffuſed throughout all Italy, but no where more apparent than at Rome; where Adminiſtration, from the uſually ſhort Duration of its Head-Conſtituents, is ſo often

often devolving through a Variety of Hands: This of Courſe produces an Idea of Tranſitorineſs that proves an effectual Bar to the ſettled, permanent Reſpect which only a Stability of Men and Meaſures can impreſs on the Subject.

THE Italians do full Credit to the Obſervation of Charles the Fifth, a keen Inſpector of Mankind; who from his frequent Reſidence among them, and the Multiplicity of his Affairs in that Country, had numberleſs Opportunities of becoming well acquainted with their Diſpoſition, and of comparing it with that of the French and Spaniards, Nations with whom he was equally converſant.

THIS celebrated Prince, (many of whoſe Sayings have been univerſally received as the completeſt Verdicts on the Subjects which gave Occaſion to them) often declared it his Opinion that the Italians were not only ſagacious and deliberate in Appearance, but that they were ſo in Reality; while the French concealed their Wiſdom with a Cloak of Folly, and the Spaniards under the Maſk of Wiſdom, were guilty of the groſſeſt Blunders.

THERE was certainly great Truth in this Obſervation; as notwithſtanding an Outſide of Levity, no People are more intelligent and dexterous than the French, in what regards their Intereſt; and though a profound Gravity of Deportment characteriſes a Spaniard, yet Experience has demonſtrated that in them it proceeds leſs from Thoughtfulneſs and Foreſight, than from Pride and Self-Reſpect; Qualities

that

that have a natural Tendency to lead a Man into many Errors.

The Italians preſerve a juſt Medium between theſe two: They have neither the Pertneſs and Flippancy of the former, nor the extreme Solemnity and Seriouſneſs of the latter; but excepting their Extravagance in the Pulpit, and at the Bar, and their Buffoonery on the Stage, are Men of a ſober, moderate Behaviour in the ordinary Occurrences of Life.

It muſt, however, be acknowledged, that this Prudence and Warineſs of the Italians, whether in their public or their private Affairs, is rather of the paſſive and cautious, than of the enterpriſing and active Kind. While it ſecures them from the Miſtakes cauſed by Precipitation, or by Dilatorineſs, the two capital Failings of their French and Spaniſh Neighbours, it produces a Sort of Heſitation at the Propriety of their Meaſures, or rather a Diffidence in their own Strength, that either diſcourages them from attempting to carry into Execution their Schemes, however well concerted, or clogs their Undertakings after they have been entered upon.

To this Unſteadineſs (of which they are chiefly guilty in national Matters) it is owing that for ſo many Ages, notwithſtanding the Advantages Nature has put into their Hands, the Italians have ſuffered their Country to be perpetually enſlaved by Foreigners. There is no Part of Europe better fortified by Situation againſt the Entrance of an Enemy, and yet none is more frequently invaded. Had the

Natives a Stock of Reſolution equal to their political Abilities, they would long ſince have delivered themſelves from the troubleſome Gueſts of whom they ſo often and ſo ſeverely complain. They once, indeed, thought themſelves in a fair Way to *Cacciare i Barbari di Italia*, to drive the Barbarians, that is to ſay, the Spaniards, French, and Germans out of Italy; a Phraſe as often in the Mouth of the laſt mentioned celebrated Pope as the *Delenda eſt Carthago*, the Neceſſity of deſtroying Carthage, was in that of Cato: But the fatal Connexions of that Pontiff with thoſe foreign Powers whom he thought to play off againſt each other, and render ſubſervient to that favourite Deſign, drew him beyond his Mark: Want of Unanimity among thoſe from whom he had promiſed himſelf a Concurrence neceſſary to effect his Plan, prevented him from proceeding in it; and as unſeaſonable Jealouſies were entertained of him, they of Courſe influenced his own Conduct: All theſe unfavourable Incidents united to form an inſuperable Bar to the Efforts of Italian Policy, and to keep them in Subjection to thoſe Barbarians whom they ſo much hated, and ſtill more deſpiſed.

Causes of the ſame Nature have operated undoubtedly, to this Day. Otherwiſe the Natives, fatigued with thoſe endleſs Viciſſitudes of Government that have ſo long afflicted their Country, muſt have, ere now, become their own Maſters.

But beſides theſe apparent Sources of Miſchief, there is a ſtill deeper rooted Evil, leſs manifeſtly perhaps, but equally, if not more detrimental to the Public,

by

by obſtructing that mutual Cordiality among Individuals, which is the moſt ſolid Baſis of all political Aſſociations.

THERE ſubſiſts among the various Bodies of People that compoſe the Italian States, a reciprocal Diſlike, often indeed an utter Deteſtation, which, in a Manner, annihilates the very Seeds of Patriotiſm, by fomenting thoſe Animoſities that totally baniſh the Reflection of their being Fellow Inhabitants of the ſame Country: Hence the Idea of a national Body is not known in Italy; the many Diviſions of which are apt to conſider themſelves as ſo many diſtinct and ſeparate Nations; and accordingly they treat each other with an Unfriendlineſs, not ſo ſay an Averſion, that leaves but little Hope of any future Sincerity of Union.

THIS Antipathy, which the reſpective Heads and Rulers are guilty of abetting without any Reſtraint, communicates itſelf to the Members in a ſtill more open and violent Degree of Outrageouſneſs; and the cruel Taunts with which they mutually aſperſe one another, beget an Inveteracy between the lower Sort that often breaks out on the moſt trivial Occaſions, and gives Riſe to very ſerious Quarrels among them.

THIS Enmity reſts on a moſt tenacious and durable Foundation, the Jealouſy that rages between their Superiors, ariſing from the well-grounded Suſpicions they entertain of each other's faireſt Pretenſions to Benevolence; a Miſtruſt which flows from a Conſciouſneſs of the reciprocal Malice and Contempt that is harboured with ſuch unrelenting Rancour, not more

by themſelves, than by the inferior Claſſes on all Sides: Thus the Romans, Neapolitans, Florentines, and Genoeſe hold one another in the moſt invincible Abhorrence: Their Language has ſcarcely Terms of ſufficient Strength and Energy to expreſs the full Meaſure of their Malevolence, and while the Commonalty are with-held by no Reſtrictions, the Dictates of good Breeding cannot always reſtrain even the better Sort from expreſſing themſelves in the moſt indecent Manner that Words are able to deviſe.

THERE are no People more inclinable than the Italians to receive Umbrage from thoſe Liberties which a Perſon cannot ſometimes avoid taking with the Politics of a Country he viſits or reſides in. Theſe are in Italy a *noli me tangere*, and tho' Foreigners may be connived at, yet the Subjects of no State are bold enough to expatiate freely on its Concerns.

HENCE the Topics of Converſation are pretty much confined. The Knowledge of thoſe Men of Parts, whoſe Lucubrations might enlighten and benefit their Country, ſeldom ſees the Day; and is cautiouſly confined within their Cloſets, or communicated only to ſome ſure and ſelect Friends, who in their Turn are not over-deſirous of ſeeming better informed than their Superiors.

LITTLE therefore is gained by the Frequentation of their Literati; whoſe Learning is, in general, of no great Profit either to themſelves or to others; if ſolid and profound, they fear to diſplay it; if trifling and ſuperficial, as it commonly proves, an Oſtentation of it can only be tedious and diſguſting.

THE

THE only valuable Branches of Science that now flouriſh in Italy, are Medicine, and its collateral Studies, and ſome Portions of Mathematics. But Objects of this Nature, tho' of great Importance, have not that diffuſive Popularity which awakens the Attention of all Men; they neceſſarily are limited to a particular Claſs, and being remote from the common Purſuits of the World, excite but little of its Curioſity.

THESE excepted, the Cultivation of liberal, manly Knowledge is at a very low Ebb in Italy; where we meet with nothing at preſent of that Univerſality of excellent Diſquiſitions on all Kind of Subjects, which employ ſo many celebrated Pens in England and in France, and have rendered thoſe two Nations incomparably the moſt illuſtrious in the Field of Literature at this Day.

THE Truth is that Education is not on the illuſtrious Footing it was formerly among the Italians; who ſeem now but little intereſted in the Glory which accrues to a Nation, from the Eminence of its Individuals in the various Provinces of intellectual Improvement: For many Years they have had but few Writers even of tolerable Merit among them. Pope Clement the eleventh, a Man of Senſe and Letters, uſed often to lament this Deficiency; and expreſs his Apprehenſions that a Time would come, when, through Want of that Reſpect which only well cultivated Abilities could command, the Power of his Succeſſors would be impaired, and the Veneration heretofore paid to the papal See be diminiſhed in a fatal Degree. Some late Events ſeem to have made the Fears of that Pontiff prophetic; and

tho' Men are not prone to look into the remote Cauſes of Events, but are moſt attentive to thoſe which immediately precede them, yet it cannot eſcape the Perception of the Judicious, that the great Superiority in all Kind of Knowledge and Learning, which other Nations have acquired over the Italians, has weakened that Reverence for the Court of Rome, on which it depends chiefly for Support; and muſt conſequently overthrow, at laſt, its Influence over the Minds of People, as ſuch an Influence can only ariſe from a Perſuaſion of the greater Wiſdom of thoſe who poſſeſs it.

THE Italians, are far from being rude and wanting in the Eſſentials of good Manners, but are by no Means remarkable for that Politeneſs and Eaſe of Behaviour which inhances the Value of Breeding ſo much beyond its real Worth, and often renders a Perſon of no true Merit ſo much more acceptable than one who, tho' adorned with the moſt ſolid and ſubſtantial Qualifications, is yet deficient in this Article. A ſtudied Rotation of Quaintneſs and Inſipidity infects their Converſation; and a ſtiff and ceremonious Deportment accompanies all their Actions: The moſt trivial Incidents of caſual Meetings, of tranſient Viſits, have their Forms and Regulations; and as little of what relates to the Propriety of Conduct is left to the good Senſe and Judgment of the Parties concerned; the Conſequence is that a free and chearful Facility of Intercourſe is excluded from the general Tenour of Society; of which, indeed, the true Spirit little flouriſhes in moſt Parts of Italy.

THERE

THERE are two Species of Characters, the one what the French call *un bon Vivant*, a hearty Trencher-man, the other a Lover of Frankneſs and Candour, the firſt of whom would do well never to viſit theſe Parts; and the ſecond muſt not expect much Satisfaction in doing it: The latter will meet with perpetual Diſappointments in the Warineſs and Reſerve he will have to encounter; and the former will find ſtill greater Difficulties to ſurmount in the extreme Abſtemiouſneſs from Revelling which he will be at no Loſs to diſcover.

AN Italian ſurveys you, as it were, at a Diſtance; and like a Party of Men in War, who dread falling into an Ambuſcade, he makes his Approaches by Degrees, but ſeldom ſo near as to afford you any Handle to make his Houſe your Home: This truly is his Caſtle, impregnable and impenetrable to either Friend or Foe: Here he enjoys himſelf in his own Way; and tho' Sobriety and Temperance are Qualities very worthy of Commendation, yet it muſt be granted that the Italians carry them at their domeſtic Tables to an Exceſs that authoriſes People to give them quite another Name.

IMPARTIALITY, however, obliges one to except from this Imputation of faring penuriouſly, the Inhabitants of the Northern Parts of Italy; and to acknowledge that they are very far from being addicted to a ſordid Courſe of Living in any Reſpect: A Portion of Jovialneſs and Feſtivity is ſeen among them much ſuperior to any Thing of the Kind in the Southern Latitudes; the People of which they eſteem the only true Italians, while they deem themſelves rather partaking of

of the other neighbouring Nations, and ſpeak of Italy as a Country not ſtrictly their own.

To give them what is avowedly their due, they are in moſt Things remarkable for a judicious Admixture of the Manners of Italy and of France; which makes them confeſſedly the moſt agreeable of all the Italians, and is the Reaſon why Foreigners are more pleaſed with, and oftner make a longer Stay among them than any where elſe in Italy.

WHATEVER ſome Italians may pretend concerning the Proweſs of their Countrymen, excepting thoſe of the North of Italy, (who may be conſidered as another Nation) the Teſtimony of all Europe is ſtrongly againſt them; That they poſſeſs a ſufficient Share of native Bravery to make a Figure in the Field may be admitted; but it is as evident that they diſplay very little Eagerneſs to ſignalize themſelves in War, and that in general an Averſion to the Profeſſion of Arms is become one of their chief Characteriſtics. Few of the Nobility, Gentry, or Commonalty, who have the leaſt Views of advancing themſelves by any other Means, however precarious and ſlender, care to enter on the military Liſt. The Armies therefore that ſo frequently fill Italy, are formed and recruited out of other Nations; and what is very deſerving of Notice, ſo well are the foreign Officers appriſed of the unwarlike Turn of the Natives, eſpecially thoſe of the eccleſiaſtical State, that they are never ſolicitous to enliſt them, often ſuffering their Regiments to remain incomplete, rather than ſupply their Deficiency in that Manner. What makes this the more remarkable is the Strictneſs of the primitive Romans,

in

in receiving none but their own Citizens into the Legions: Little did they imagine that in Ages to come, the Race of Men born and bred in the City and Country they inhabited, would, for that very Reaſon, be judged unfit to bear Arms.

THE Employments an Italian Gentleman delights in are of the pacific Kind, and ſuch as will not expoſe him to Danger or to Fatigue. Thus many who are not inclined to become Eccleſiaſtics, and yet have no Fortune to depend on, inſtead of exerting their Induſtry for the Acquiſition of one, prefer the Bread of Idleneſs and Indolence in the Service of ſome Grandee. Hence it is, that in Italy, they who are decorated with the Title of Princes count ſo many poor Gentlemen in their Retinue, who find Means to make Shift with much leſs than the ſmalleſt Ingenuity would procure them in a more creditable Way, if they had Senſe enough to think the Exerciſe of their Capacity not diſhonouring, and Spirit ſufficient to undertake ſuch a Taſk.

ROME has many of theſe Princes, moſtly Deſcendants of the Relations of the ſeveral Popes, who on their Exaltation to the pontifical Throne create them ſuch, and enable them and their Poſterity, by large Donations, to live up to the Title. But though they do themſelves little Honour by the Splendor of their Houſe-keeping, which is formed on the circumſcribed Plan above-mentioned, yet no People are more tenacious of the Privileges relating to external Pomp; the Meaſure of which is dealt out by ſtated Rules, and inſiſted upon with ſo much Nicety, Preciſion, and Jealouſy,

louſy, that as none of them will abate of the leaſt Appurtenance of Parade, which Cuſtom has made his Due, they are as attentive in ſuffering no Addition of it to be allowed to any Individual of their own Level, without immediately throwing in their Claim to the like Proportion; and above all Things are watchful that none below them ſhall arrogate thoſe Honours and Marks of Diſtinction, which have been appropriated to Perſons of their Rank only.

THE Italians preſerve, in the midſt of the moſt ridiculous Amuſements, an Air of Steadineſs and Gravity, which adds to the Riſibility of their Character in thoſe Reſpects, when we reflect how prepoſterous and inconſiſtent it is with the Purpoſe they have in View, which one would think is that of Relaxation and Merriment. Of the former, indeed, no People ſeem fonder, but the latter is what, in the Opinion of attentive Travellers, they are far from having a right Notion of. The Reaſon of this may be the perpetual Guard they keep on their Thoughts, and the immenſe Caution leſt any unweighed Expreſſion ſhould fall from their Lips, on which they wear, one may ſay, ſuch a Padlock of Circumſpection, that no Individuals have leſs to anſwer for indiſcreet Words than the Italians, who are indiſputably the ſtricteſt Obſervers of the firſt Part of the Counſel, one of their Countrymen formerly gave to an Engliſh Traveller, which was to keep *I penſieri ſtretti ed il Viſo ſciolto*, a cloſe Mind and an open Countenance. It is no Wonder they ſhould be Strangers to the laſt, when we conſider the firſt is a continual Obſtruction to it, as nothing is more difficult for Perſons of

of dark, uncommunicative Tempers, than to appear frank and unreſerved.

HENCE, they ſupremely delight in thoſe Kinds of Diverſion where a Perſon aſſumes a feigned Character. Such are for Inſtance, thoſe poetical Dialogues, in the quick, extemporaneous Compoſition of which they are amazingly expert and ingenious, and diſplay a Fund of Wit and Vivacity that prove how capable Nature has made them of greater Things: The Aſſiſtance of vocal Muſic is not leſs frequently called upon: But above all, Maſquerades are the darling Amuſements both of the high and low; who find therein an ample Field to expatiate, without incurring the leaſt Danger from the Inadvertencies of Speech, of which little or no Uſe is made on ſuch Occaſions that can properly be called one's own.

FROM this Exceſs of Vigilance and Diſcretion, when they engage in Diſcourſe, it is with ſuch a Preparation of Care and Foreſight, that no Subject is ſtarted which might warp them from their Intention of ſaying nothing they might recollect with any Anxiety for the Conſequence. Their Cautiouſneſs even extends to the Prevention of an unguarded Behaviour in others: Thus when a Foreigner is invited to their Converſations, Matters of Moment are induſtriouſly avoided in his Preſence; leſt, by the Curioſity or Baldneſs peculiar to ſome Nations, but very unwelcome in Italy, he ſhould be prompted to propoſe any Queſtions it would be diſagreeable to reſolve, or to hazard Aſſertions, which, though attended with no Reply, might leave a Sting in the Memories of the Audience.

To

To these among other Causes is to be imputed the Distance the Italians are so studious in contriving between themselves and the *Ultramontani*, as they stile their European Neighbours, in whatever has a Tendency to produce a Connexion beyond the Limits of a civil, indiscriminate Acquaintance; lest a too frequent Intercourse should breed a Sort of Intimacy they are very unwilling to cultivate with Foreigners; not so much from Pride and Superciliousness, as from an Apprehension that these might intrude on the Secrecy and Closeness of their Disposition. For these Reasons the Topics of their Conversation with Strangers are commonly very uninteresting, as they make it a Point to touch, if possible, on nothing that might lead to much Thought and Discussion, and had rather act the Part of a meer *Cicerone*, and entertain their Company with dry insipid Remarks on the architectural Beauties of an Edifice, the Excellence of a Statue or Picture, the Merit of an Antique, and such like; on which, it must be confessed, they are much better qualified, as well as inclined to enlarge than upon any other Subjects.

One may conclude these Strictures on the Italians, with observing that the two predominant Passions of their Ancestors, Patriotism and a Thirst of Glory, are now become antiquated and obsolete among their Descendants. Slavery and Oppression have destroyed the first, Idleness and Pusillanimity the last. There is no Country in Europe of which the Inhabitants feel so little of that enthusiastic Warmth for its Prosperity, that zealous Attachment to its Interests, and those ardent Wishes for its Renown, which are the constant, inexhaustible

inexhauſtible Sources from whence ſo much Heroiſm has flown. That laudable Deſire of acquiring Fame by illuſtrious Actions, which animates their more daring Neighbours, excites but little Emulation among them, eſpecially the Romans, eſteemed, as already ſaid, the leaſt martial of all the Italians; and who are, indeed, ſo utterly unworthy of the Name they bear, and ſo ſcandalouſly fallen from thoſe Sentiments that once rendered it reſpectable and dreaded, that a military Man is now become the moſt unacceptable Gueſt in all their Meetings and Aſſociations; which diſgraceful Circumſtance is ſo true, that even the fair Sex, whoſe Predilection for Gentlemen of the Sword, is, in every other Part of Europe, conſpicuous, will here turn from them with Indifference, not to ſay with Diſdain, in order to beſtow their Attention and Complaiſance on the moſt inſignificant Individual that happens to be clad in a clerical Habit, which, among this degenerate People, is the moſt honourable, and always the moſt prepoſſeſſing in Favour of the Wearer; not on Account of the Sanctity of that Profeſſion which it indicates (as conſiderable Numbers of thoſe who aſſume it are no Clergymen) but becauſe, whether they belong to the Clergy, or to the Laity, it is among thoſe who chuſe to appear in this Dreſs that are found the Beaux and Women's Men of modern Rome; where the Ladies are much more captivated with the flowery Speeches, and Sycophancy of theſe artful Enamoratos, than with Merit or Valour; and from an Admiration of thoſe Talents for Intrigue, of which theſe acute Gentlemen are ſuch complete Maſters, are the more ſuſceptible of Partiality in their Behalf, and the readier at all Times

to

to give them the Preference over any other Competitors in Affairs of this Nature, from a Conviction, founded on Experience, of their Dexterity in conducting them with that Safety which is the principal Encouragement to engage in them.

From what has been premiſed, we have a Right to infer that Pride, Indolence, Effeminacy, and Ignorance, are the four Cardinal Vices of Italy.

The firſt pervades all the upper Stations of Life, and took its Riſe from the Aſcendancy the Italians enjoyed in former Ages, when their Country was the Seat of Learning, and of every uſeful or polite Art; and the Court of Rome poſſeſſed the ſpiritual, and almoſt the temporal Empire of the weſtern World. This they cannot forget; and as a Maſter unwillingly ſees himſelf excelled by his Scholar, ſo the Italians, who have been the Preceptors of Europe, are mortified at the Superiority ſome of its Nations have acquired over them.

Their Indolence is the Reſult of their political Situation, and ſuperſtitious Tenets: Theſe promote divers Modes of Living abſolutely deſtructive of thoſe Calls that awaken Induſtry; which unleſs ſtimulated by Want and Neceſſity, is apt to grow remiſs and torpid. Hence moſt Parts of Italy, inſtead of laborious Manufacturers and Tradeſmen, vying with each other in the Improvement of their Buſineſs, and zealous to provide for their Families, are filled with Seminaries and Monaſteries, the uſeleſs Employments and Celibacy of whoſe Inhabitants conſpire to impoveriſh and depopulate the Land; which, though not deficient

in

in Numbers, contains nothing like the far greater Increaſe of Mankind it might maintain, if Induſtry and the Cultivation of their Country were encouraged in Proportion to its Fertility, and the Ingenuity of the Natives.

Such are the natural and the neceſſary Effects of a Doctrine that recommends a ſingle Life as the moſt acceptable to the Deity; while, on the other Hand, the wretched Policy of their different Governments, almoſt inattentive to every Meaſure wherein the Benefit of the Subject is concerned, is wholly engroſſed by the Study of preſerving abſolute, unlimited Authority; and of exerciſing it to the fulleſt Extent in the moſt unfeeling Manner; and aggravated by all that Haughtineſs and Inſolence which a ſucceſsful Career of Tyranny inſpires.

Their Effeminacy is a very obvious Conſequence of that ridiculous Opinion of Self-Dignity, which reconciles an Averſion to Labour, with a ſpiritleſs Reſignation to Poverty and Dependance: So ſtrange a Perverſion of the Faculties plunges them into a Sort of Oblivion of thoſe Ends for which they were formed; and ſuffers them to emerge from Inactivity, only to indulge in thoſe Gratifications that ſooth and amuſe the Mind, without affording Employment ſufficient to rouſe it from its Lethargy, and put Life and Vigour into its Functions.

Examples of this Species of Depravity abound in thoſe unbeneficed Churchmen, and Semi-Eccleſiaſtics, of whom ſuch Multitudes hang like a dead Weight

upon Society: A Claſs of Beings whom Scantineſs of Means to ſubſiſt obliges to uſe every deſpicable Art to preſerve themſelves from utter Indigence. Theſe, together with the Dregs of ſuch as labour to keep Pace with Perſons in genteel Life, form a Body of Men whoſe chief Occupation is to waſte their Lives in a Round of the moſt ignominious Diſſipation; who live, as it were, upon the Fortune of the Day, and dedicate it to that equally ſcandalous and unprofitable Buſineſs of attending on thoſe religious Farces, the Exhibition of which is ſo univerſal a Paſtime in Italy; and on thoſe many other empty Shews and Means of miſſpending Time, with which this Country is ſo plentifully provided.

The laſt is the never-failing Conſequence of the three firſt. When People are elated with Self-conceit, are become careleſs of their Concerns, and mindful only of Trifles, what Entrance remains for Knowledge and Information? Which require a large Opening of Thought, never to be effected but by an Aſſiduity of Application, ariſing from the Conviction of our intellectual Wants, a ſtrong Deſire of improving, and a Contempt of all thoſe frivolous Purſuits from whence no Utility can be derived.

It is a diſagreeable Taſk to expoſe the Vices and Failings of Individuals; and a ſtill more unpleaſing one to hold out to public View thoſe of whole Nations. But the Severity of both is equally neceſſary; the firſt, as an Execution of Criminals, ſerves to deter others from following the ſame Courſe; the ſecond, like the Deſcription of an epidemical Diſtemper, awak-

ens

ens in Men a Solicitude and Carefulneſs to avoid the Infection.

INDUCED by ſuch Motives, one may venture to relate, with Confidence and Reſolution, thoſe Paſſages that diſgrace the Body of a People; as without injuring ſuch as are innocent (as many doubtleſs are in the extenſive Exception that always accompanies national Accuſations) the Puniſhment thus inflicted on the Guilty, becomes a Preſervative to the Virtues and good Qualities of other Nations; who are taught to reverence and cheriſh them, by viewing the Deformity of the Reverſe, as the young Spartans were made ſenſible of the Infamy and the Baſeneſs of Ebriety, by the Care which their Elders took to render them attentive to the Behaviour of their Slaves, the Helotes, while they were in that ſcandalous Condition.

OF THE SPANIARDS.

THE Country which firſt made a capital Figure in Europe, and excited the principal Attention of the other Nations, was SPAIN, whoſe Power, during a Century, was formidable to all its Neighbours, and if well managed might have been ſtill greater.

FROM the Union of the Houſe of Arragon with the Houſe of Caſtile, and of both with that of Auſtria, in the Perſon of Charles the Fifth, not many Years after, aroſe the moſt extenſive Empire in Europe, ſince that of the Romans.

As Ambition is the natural Reſult of immenſe Poſſeſſions, Charles the Fifth, and his Son, Philip the Second, were the moſt ambitious Princes of their Time; and as the Individuals of a Nation, however deſpotically ruled, are ſtill apt to rate their Importance in Proportion to that of their Rulers, the vaſt Power of theſe two Monarchs inſpired the Spaniards with an Overbearingneſs and Arrogance, of which the Downfall of their Monarchy's former Splendor has not been able to diveſt them even at this Day.

THIS exceſſive Greatneſs was a perpetual Subject of Envy to other Countries; whoſe Writers have wantonly indulged themſelves in partial, unmerciful Repreſentations, not only of the Views of thoſe Princes, which were iniquitous enough, without needing Exaggeration, but alſo of the Character of their Subjects, much in the ſame Manner the French have, in later Times, from ſimilar Motives, been treated much worſe in theſe Reſpects, than they deſerved.

THE Concluſion of the fifteenth, and the greater Part of the ſixteenth Century, conſtitute the Æra of Spaniſh Grandeur. Before that Period, they were involved in the common Ignorance of Europe, and had no other Means of illuſtrating themſelves than by an unremitting Firmneſs in oppoſing the Moors; in their Wars with whom they diſplayed a Fund of Magnanimity, Reſolution, and Perſeverance never exceeded in Hiſtory. After thoſe were expelled or ſubdued, their Genius, long fettered by inteſtine Struggles, ſhone forth at once with amazing Brightneſs, and ſhewed a People who wanted only proper Guides to attain to the Summit of all Kind of Glory. Though nothing but Feats of Chivalry, and the wildeſt Exceſſes of romantic Valour, had hitherto been uppermoſt in their Thoughts, and were almoſt equally their Occupations in Peace or in War, yet, even in theſe Deviations from Juſtneſs and Propriety of Conduct, they diſcovered a Nobleneſs of Temper and Inclination, which proved how fit they naturally were for the greateſt and moſt arduous Undertakings; and that with Care and Judgment, this Effervency of their Minds might be rendered of the moſt happy Utility.

SUCH were the Spaniards of former Days; born with the moſt excellent Capacity and Diſpoſition, and only deficient in the Point of Improvement.

THIS Deficiency the great Ximenes undertook to remedy by the ſame Method Richelieu more ſucceſsfully adopted in France, a hundred Years after; and which Wolſey, the former's Cotemporary, was introducing into England, preciſely at that Time, the Cultivation and Encouragement of Learning and polite Literature.

THESE three celebrated Cardinals, who were all equally ambitious, had certainly exalted Ideas; and though not without great Failings, ſtill deſerve highly of the Republic of Letters, for a Variety of generous and magnificent Foundations in their Favour.

MANY fortunate Circumſtances attended the Deſigns of Ximenes: Excluſive of his being a prime, unrivaled Miniſter, firmly rooted in the Confidence and good Opinion of his Conſtituents, and not leſs poſſeſſed of the general Eſteem, he flouriſhed at an Epocha that ſeemed in a Manner, to invite his Endeavours for the Proſperity and Reputation of his Country.

SPAIN had juſt diſcovered the new World, whoſe Riches were now become her annual Tribute. Her Navigation was daily increaſing; and the Spaniards, elated with thoſe Proſpects of immenſe Profit that were continually opening to their View, felt a Warmth and Reſolution to undertake and atchieve the moſt daring

daring Adventures. At Home, Tranquillity, by the total Subjection of the Moors, was now laſtingly eſtabliſhed; and nothing remained but to diffuſe its happy Effects throughout the Realm, by the ſalutary Meaſures of a wiſe Government. This Ximenes propoſed as the Labour of his latter and better Days. Accordingly when he had, by Means of a brilliant Adminiſtration, acquired that Meaſure of Reſpect and Deference which was neceſſary to the Proſecution of his Deſigns, he ſpared no Pains, no Coſt, no Vigilance, in framing the moſt prudent Regulations for the domeſtic Welfare of Society, and introducing good Order into every Department of the State, by thoſe equally judicious and beneficial Arrangements and Inſtitutions that reflect ſo much Honour on his Memory; among which, thoſe that related to the Care and Education of the young Nobility and Gentry employed his principal Solicitude, from a juſt Perſuaſion, that through the Neglect or Cultivation of their Youth, they become the chief Support and Ornament of their Country, or the principal Cauſes of its Diſgrace and Ruin.

But the provident Genius of this great Miniſter died with him; and though Spain, in the Courſe of a few Years, produced a very conſiderable Number of eminent Men, in all Denominations, (for whom, undoubtedly, ſhe was highly indebted to the Plans he had formed) yet thoſe among them who were at the Head of Affairs, led aſtray by the impetuous ill-placed Ambition of the Times, were wholly taken up with Tranſactions Abroad, and paid the leaſt of their Attention to thoſe eſſential Objects that demanded it ſo much at Home. Thus, by a fatal Relaxation, and finally

nally an almoſt entire Oblivion of that internal Polity, over which Ximenes had been ſo watchful, deeming it, with Reaſon, the true Fountain of all national Felicity; his Countrymen, though ſupported by all the Helps that prodigious Wealth and extenſive Dominions could afford, were baffled in all their Enterpriſes, and foiled in all their Deſigns, by Nations much leſs opulent, and leſs powerful than themſelves.

As a Liſtleſſneſs and Indifference prevailed at Court, about the Welfare and good Government of their almoſt boundleſs Acquiſitions in America, the Adventurers in that vaſt Hemiſphere were left at Liberty to range throughout it, like ſo many Beaſts of Prey; and while their Remittances of endleſs Treaſures were pouring into the Ports of Spain, little, or indeed ſcarce any, Notice was taken of the infamous Methods that were uſed to obtain them.

Hence Avarice and Cruelty became the Characteriſtics of the Nation, and that ancient Generoſity of Sentiments and Actions, for which they had once been ſo renowned, gave Way to a Ferociouſneſs of Soul that impelled them to the Commiſſion of Barbarities, of which no Parallel is to be found in the Annals of Mankind.

This Bloodineſs of Temper was not only exerted in remote, uncivilized Regions, where none but Savages were Witneſſes and Sufferers; but even their European Provinces felt its dire Effects. The bare Mention of ſuch a Monſter as the Duke of Alva ſufficiently

ciently reminds one of the melancholy Truth of this Aſſertion.

It raged, indeed, with no leſs Violence in their own Country; where the inhuman Spirit which firſt eſtabliſhed the Inquiſition, ſpread the Horrors of that Tribunal throughout the Land, with ſcarce any Diſtinction of Age or Sex. Women in their Teens fell a Sacrifice to its Fury. No Eminence of Merit was admitted as any Protection. The very Favourites of Kings, nay even Kings themſelves, were not exempted from its Juriſdiction. One of their Philips having expreſſed his Commiſeration for ſome of the unhappy Victims he ſaw leading to Execution, was (in Compliance with the Deſire of ſome of his deluded Subjects, who thought him bound to give a ſignal Proof of his Repentance, for ſeeming to diſapprove of the inquiſitorial Proceedings) prevailed upon, as a Puniſhment upon himſelf, to ſuffer ſome of his Blood to be drawn, and thrown into the Flames by the public Executioner.

Here one may reaſonably exclaim,

Tantum Religio potuit ſuadere Malorum.

Such were the execrable Deeds Religion could inſpire. Such an Abhorrence of our Fellow-Creatures can a Difference of Opinion concerning the Diſpenſations of Heaven, and the Manner of worſhipping the Deity, create among Men; who, however willing to agree in every other Reſpect, and to terminate amicably the moſt outrageous Diſputes, are ſtill averſe to drop their Feuds

Feuds and Animoſities about Matters, which in their Nature can neither be beneficial or detrimental to the Community; and too readily forget that Zeal is reconcilable with Equity in the Suppreſſion or Encouragement of thoſe Things only that are evidently, and beyond the Power of Diſputation, conducive to the viſible Good or Evil of Society.

But the minuteſt Deviation from the religious Rites and Tenets eſtabliſhed and profeſſed by public Authority, was then, and is yet, ſo capital an Offence in Spain, as to be reputed equal even to high Treaſon.

Thus, in the celebrated Charter of Immunities granted of old to the Biſcayans, for their Valour againſt the Moors, while Fines, Impriſonment, or the Galleys are made ſufficient Penalties for other Crimes, however enormous, that of Hereſy, as they ſtile it, is excepted from the Liſt of pardonable Tranſgreſſions, together with Rebellion, the only Caſes wherein a Native of that Province is puniſhable with Death: A Privilege heretofore enjoyed alſo by the Catalonians, till deprived of that, and all others, by the Houſe of Bourbon, whoſe Acceſſion they too faithfully united with our Miniſtry in oppoſing.

To this Spirit of ſuperſtitious Intoleration, is to be aſcribed the ſtrange Behaviour of the Spaniſh Ambaſſadors, ſent to England in order to negotiate a Peace with James the Firſt; who, notwithſtanding the diſtreſſed Situation of their Country, and the Neceſſity they were under of a Pacification with England, at any Rate,

Rate, ſuffered their Bigotry to proceed ſo far, as to deem it criminal to participate in any Act of Devotion, with thoſe whom they accounted Heretics; and were with much Difficulty brought to conſent, that any Thankſgiving ſhould, while they were preſent, be offered in the King's Chapel, when the Peace was ſigned and ſworn to on both Sides.

So abſurd were, at this Period, their Prepoſſeſſions againſt all thoſe who diſſented from their Modes of Faith, that the Inhabitants of Madrid were much ſurpriſed to ſee the Engliſh belonging to the Train of the Embaſſy ſent to Spain, after Queen Elizabeth's Death, ſo handſome and well made; as the Commonalty throughout that Kingdom, were taught, and fully believed, that Uglineſs and Deformity were impreſſed on their Perſons, as a Mark of Reprobation for their Non-conformity with the Church of Rome.

Nor were they leſs amazed during the Wars for the Spaniſh Succeſſion at the Commencement of this Century, at the generous, humane Behaviour of the Engliſh Officers and Soldiers in their Country, from whom, as Heretics, they expected nothing but Savageneſs and Barbarity.

These Prejudices againſt Proteſtants have been carried to ſo ſtupid an Exceſs, that even ſuch of their own Communion as have unluckily borne a Name ſimilar to that of any Perſon celebrated among the Reformed, have ſometimes found it an obſtacle to their advancement.

An

An equal Degree of Ignorance and Prepoſterouſneſs infects the Modes of Worſhip in Spain, where the moſt indecent and ſcandalous Practices are tolerated in a Manner that diſfigures Religion, and renders it a Subject of Contempt and Ridicule. In the Height of their ſpiritual Exultations, while the Hoſt is carried about in triumphant Solemnity, it is common to ſee it followed by People dreſſed in Maſquerade, who teſtify their Joy by Leaping, Dancing, and playing on Caſtaniattos, all the Way, and often continue theſe Expreſſions of Merriment in the very Churches.

This ſuperſtitious Delirium the Spaniards propagated through the ſeveral Provinces they ſo long poſſeſſed in the Low-Countries, where, to this Day, their religious Proceſſions are intermixed with ſuch antic Exhibitions, that a Spectator is at a Loſs to determine with what Intent they are performed, whether to excite Devotion or Laughter; whether to honour Heaven, or to divert the Populace. In moſt of, or all the great Towns of Flanders and Brabant there are annual Feſtivals uſually kept in the Summer-ſeaſon, for the greater Conveniency of a general Reſort from all Parts of the Diſtrict. On the Day appointed, all the different Companies of Tradeſmen and Artificers aſſemble, and begin the March, ſomewhat in the Manner of our Lord-Mayor's Shew. They are followed by the ſecular and regular Clergy belonging to the Place, who form, as it were, an Eſcort to the prodigious Number of Shrines brought forth on ſuch Occaſions, as all Relics of any Note claim a Share in this Solemnity. After theſe, a complete Syſtem of Heathen Mythology is repreſented by Perſons accoutered in the various Forms

and

and Dreſſes attributed to each Deity. Next are diſplayed a String of Devices of the allegorical Kind, as the Wheel of Fortune, the Virtues and Vices, the Inclinations and Paſſions of Mankind. The Rear is generally cloſed by a Set of immenſe Wicker Giants, to whom ours at Guildhall are no more than Dwarfs.

THESE Extravagancies, of which this Deſcription is by no Means exaggerated, do not appear ſuch to the Crowds they attract from all Quarters. After having teſtified the utmoſt Reſpect for the Images, and the Remains of thoſe divers Saints, whoſe Patronage and Protection of their City and Territory theſe Farces are partly inſtituted to commemorate; they make an eaſy and quick Tranſition to that Looſeneſs and Intemperance of vulgar, inelegant Mirth, which the ſubſequent Scenes of Oddities and Buffoonery cannot fail to occaſion.

NOTWITHSTANDING the Magnificence of the Spaniſh Court, and the Profuſion of the Grandees in their Expences, during the Reigns of Charles the Fifth, and Philip the Second, no Artiſt of capital Eminence aroſe among the Natives; their Architects, their Statuaries, their Painters, came from Italy; and when the firſt of theſe Princes built a Palace at Madrid, and the ſecond the Eſcurial, the very Workmen were ſupplied from Abroad. The Spaniards, like the ancient Romans, were willing enough to encourage and patroniſe the fine Arts, but left the Cultivation of them to others, judging it more eligible to apply themſelves to War, Politics, and the Improvement of their Fortunes, by lucrative Voyages to their American Settlements or beneficial Employments in the numerous Departments

of

of their widely diffuſed Monarchy. One would have thought they had in View the celebrated Lines of Virgil, wherein he recommends, in a Manner, the Neglect of ſuch Arts to his Countrymen, and adviſes them to purſue thoſe of Empire and Conqueſt. Their whole Practice, at leaſt, tended to the ſtricteſt Obſervance of the Poet's Precept.

WHAT rendered this Inattention to Works of Ingenuity the more remarkable, was, that Flanders, their favourite Poſſeſſion, and their Italian Provinces, both abounded in the moſt illuſtrious Profeſſors of all thoſe Branches in that Age. What is ſtill more, they themſelves ſo long continued the profeſſed Admirers of all theſe Arts, that even in the Decline of their Monarchy, (at a Juncture when their Finances could ill afford ſo unneceſſary an Expence) the Court of Spain purchaſed that ineſtimable Collection of Pictures, Statues, and other prime Productions of Genius, which our unfortunate Charles the Firſt, in the Days of his Power and Proſperity, had been collecting from all Parts of Europe, at ſo great a Coſt; and which, after his tragical End, were ſold by Order of the Parliament.

THE Truth was, that, like the Romans in the Times of their Corruption, the Spaniards were greedy, rapacious Plunderers of the Countries under their Subjection; and as many, if not moſt of their Governors, were too perfect Imitators of a *Verres*, it was no Wonder they ſhewed ſo little Solicitude for the Eſtabliſhment and Culture of Arts at Home; when, without being indebted to the Talents of their own Countrymen, they could, by means of the Riches they extorted

torted from every Province they were Maſters of, obtain whatever Money can command.

We ought, nevertheleſs, to except from the Severity of theſe Strictures a few Natives of Spain, who, during the laſt Century, diſtinguiſhed themſelves in Painting, ſuch as Velaſques and Murillo, eſpecially the latter, many of whoſe Performances are held in the higheſt Eſteem by the ableſt Connoiſſeurs.

THEIR Negligence in theſe Matters did not, however, affect their intellectual Purſuits, and they were not deſtitute of Men of prime Merit in the Republic of Letters.

IN the mean Time, through that Aſcendancy, which is the natural Conſequence of extenſive Empire, and not a little through the great Opinion entertained of their national Abilities, as well as from the Neceſſity of Intercourſe with a People who ruled over ſo many Countries, their Language grew diffuſive, and was reputed a faſhionable Accompliſhment in genteel Life. Their Cuſtoms, and Manners too, were adopted throughout Europe, and their very Dreſs became the Standard of Imitation, even among their Enemies, as may be particularly inſtanced in the Court of Queen Elizabeth; a Woman, who notwithſtanding her Greatneſs of Mind, and the Multiplicity of important Buſineſs, that ever kept her Abilities on the fulleſt Stretch, had yet ſo much of her Sex's Weakneſs in the Article of Apparel, that it is ſaid near three thouſand Suits of Dreſs were found in her Wardrobe at her Death; a Sumptuouſneſs that ill agreed with her extreme Parſimony in other Matters.

THIS

THIS Prevalence of Spaniſh Faſhions influenced all Europe in a Degree equal at leaſt, if not ſuperior, to that Infatuation which of late brought French Modes ſo much into Vogue; and ſo cloſely were the Spaniards copied, that even the Circumſtance of nocturnal Courtſhip, agreeable enough to their warm Climate, found its Way into the North, where the Cuſtom of ſerenading their Miſtreſſes became frequent among Lovers. An Abſurdity which, from Milton's ſatyrical Mention of it, ſubſiſted probably even in his Time.

THE Superiority that Spain aſſumed and maintained ſo long over the reſt of Europe, began with Ferdinand, ſurnamed the Catholic, whoſe Succeſſes in War, and immenſe Acquiſitions of Territory, rendered him the greateſt Monarch in Chriſtendom. As he was rather of a moroſe Temper, and hated the Intruſion of much Company on his thoughtful, plodding Diſpoſition, he deviſed thoſe Forms and Regulations which were the Baſis of that Etiquette eſtabliſhed afterwards by his Succeſſors; and which, under the Pretence and Appearance of preſerving the Dignity due to Majeſty, contributed ſo effectually to caſt a Heavineſs and Gloom on their Courts. In order to keep his Subjects at a Diſtance, and ſtrike them with the greater Awe, he increaſed the Number of his domeſtic Retainers, and formed a military Attendance on his Perſon; in both which he was copied by our Henry the ſeventh, in his Inſtitution of the Yeomen of the Guard; and by Lewis the eleventh of France, in that of the *Franc-Archers*, Free-Archers. Theſe three Monarchs, indeed, bore a ſtrong Reſemblance of each other; equally ſuſpicious,

bus, and full of Diſſimulation, equally avaricious, and expert in extorting Money from their Subjects, through various Pretexts, and equally miſtruſted and hated by their Foes and Allies, and odious to their own People.

CHARLES the fifth, who ſucceeded him, had a Genius and Capacity equal to the great and continual Scenes of Activity that employed his whole Life. The Character of the Spaniards, in his Time, became that of a victorious, triumphant People; and their Weight in the political Scale of Europe was ſuch, that both France and England were fain to forget their ancient Animoſities, and often cloſe in the firmeſt Union, to reſiſt the Torrent of his Succeſſes.

As this Monarch knew perfectly how to reconcile Majeſty with Mildneſs and Affability, the Syſtem of Statelineſs and Reſerve invented by his Predeceſſor, was not purſued in his Reign; and an Eaſe and Freedom of Behaviour was uppermoſt in his Court; which contained too many Warriors, and was ever too much in Motion, from his perpetual Travels, to indulge in thoſe dark, myſterious Politics, only found under the Roof of thoſe Princes whoſe Lives are ſpent at a Diſtance from the Field of Buſineſs, and whoſe Schemes are the Fruit of inactive Speculation.

BUT his Son, Philip the ſecond, inheriting the genuine Spirit of Ferdinand, ſoon reſtored the Uſages of which he had been the original Founder and Abettor. Frankneſs and Candour were quickly diſcarded, and Ambiguity and Fineſſe became the Channels through which Affairs were conducted. His favourite Miniſ-

ters were thoſe who excelled in Craft and Subtlety; while a generous, manly Turn of Mind was termed Inexperience and Precipitation. The Conſequences were exactly ſuch as his Father had foreſeen and predicted. The Science of Intrigue became the moſt commendable Talent at Court; and that Knowledge on which only good Government is erected, that of the Inclinations and Intereſts of the Subject, was treated with Slight and Contempt; as if the Diſpoſitions of a People were of Courſe to give way to the Will and Caprice of the Sovereign. This was the Rock on which Philip ſplit, and which his Succeſſors never ſtrove to avoid; thinking it beneath them to govern by Maxims different from his, who was, unhappily for his Country, eſteemed a conſummate Politician. But theſe Maxims were evidently narrow and circumſcribed, and quite of the ſordid, ſelfiſh, Machiavelian Kind. They conſiſted in embroiling every neighbouring State, and ruling his own by a ſtanding Force. Thus he filled all the European Courts with his Emiſſaries; by whoſe Machinations the Seeds of Diviſion were ſown every where; and his own Dominions he treated with the utmoſt Unfeelingneſs and Ferocity; violating their Liberties, without the leaſt Remorſe or Heſitation, annulling all thoſe Immunities and Laws that ſtood in the Way of Oppreſſion, and giving up to the Brutality of the Soldiery, whoever durſt oppoſe his Incroachments. In ſhort, acting without either Juſtice or Humanity, ſetting Conſcience and Reputation at Defiance, and amply juſtifying the Idea of his Character, ſo completely and forcibly expreſſed in that celebrated Picture of Tyranny in the State's Aſſembly Room at the Hague, where he is repreſented trampling

ling on the Rights and Privileges of Mankind, and brandiſhing the Sword of Perſecution and Barbarity.

VERY different had been the Conduct of his Father; who in the general Tenour of his domeſtic Proceedings, took care to conſult the Humour of his Subjects, and reſpected thoſe Regulations that were too firmly eſtabliſhed to be infringed without giving Umbrage and Diſſatisfaction. Hence, tho' involved in a Series of unceaſing Wars, and conſequently ever in want of Money, he was ſo judicious and and circumſpectful in the Exaction of pecuniary Supplies, that he preſerved the Affection of moſt of his People to the laſt: And in one Inſtance only, that of his Treatment of the Citizens of Ghent, deviated from that Equity and Mildneſs he had laid down as the Rule of his Government and had Recourſe to compulſory Meaſures: Of which however, he afterwards manifeſted a Repentance and Diſapprobation, and ſtrove, by a Return of Lenity, to efface the Remembrance.

THO' Philip did ſo much Miſchief to the World, yet he was qualified with the Title of *el Diſcreto*, the Wiſe, much in the ſame Strain of Flattery that Lewis the fourteenth was ſtiled the Great. So far was Philip from deſerving ſuch an Epithet, that to his Mal-adminiſtration may be fairly aſcribed the Ruin of the Spaniſh Monarchy. With much more Truth and Propriety did his Enemies call him the Demon of the South.

THERE is a ſtriking Likeneſs between the Character of both theſe Princes. If Lewis the fourteenth was a

better Man, yet it muſt alſo be allowed he was almoſt as bad a King. Their political Features exhibit a moſt fatal Similitude in every eſſential Part of the Compariſon. Both made their Ambition the ſole Standard of their Conduct, and carried their Pretenſions as far as they thought their Arms would make them good. Thus the one ſeized Flanders, and the Franche Comtĕ, and the other made himſelf Maſter of Portugal; to none of which Countries either had the leaſt Shadow of Right. Lewis, inſtigated by a Spirit of Bigotry, perſecuted his Proteſtant Subjects, and forced them to take Refuge among his Enemies, and ſtrengthen them by an Acceſſion of that Induſtry, which was a much heavier Loſs to his Kingdom, than the prodigious Wealth they carried out of it. Philip had already ſet him the Example, and infuriated (if one may uſe ſuch an Expreſſion) by the evil Genius of Superſtition, purſued with Fire and Sword all ſuch among his People whoſe Opinions he thought heretical; and through the Terror of his Barbarities compelled the moſt valuable Part of them to ſeek a Shelter among the neighbouring Nations, and increaſe their Numbers, Riches, and Ingenuity in Manufactures and Trade. Lewis, by his unwarrantable Schemes, and Haughtineſs of Conduct, excited a Confederacy that overturned all his Grandeur, reduced him to the moſt abject Situation, and his Realm to the moſt deplorable Condition. Philip had trod in the ſame Path, and by his iniquitous Deſigns of illegal Conqueſt, and Endeavours at lawleſs Oppreſſion, raiſed up Alliances againſt him, and a Spirit of Oppoſition from every Quarter, which he ſtrove, in vain to overcome and ſuppreſs. His endleſs Enterprizes proved fruitleſs, in the moſt

deſtruc-

deſtructive Degree: They totally exhauſted his Treaſures, ruined his Fleets and Armies, loſt him thoſe Provinces that were the nobleſt Portion of his Inheritance, and, finally, left the Remainder of the Spaniſh Monarchy in a State of Diſorder and Debility, from which it never was able to recover. Baſe and faithleſs in their Politics, they had nothing of that heroic Pride that ſcorns to take unworthy Advantages of a Foe, and *Dolus an Vertus*, Force or Fraud, ſeems to have been the ruling Maxim in all their Proceedings. Hence, their underhand, inſidious Dealings among their Neighbours, and their treacherous Efforts to create Diviſion among thoſe whom, while united, they had not Courage to face. Thus Lewis, by pretending a Deſire to bring the Engliſh Nation under the abſolute Influence of a Monarch and Court, who were ignobly become his Penſioners, laboured, with all his Might, to revive thoſe Scenes of Diſcord, which French Policy, under the miniſterial Guidance of a Richelieu, had ſo flagitiouſly promoted. Philip, in the ſame Manner, by eſpouſing the Cauſe of the League (whoſe Chiefs and principal Abettors were all in his Pay) fomented the Troubles of France, to the utmoſt of his Power. To complete the Likeneſs, they were both governed alternately by Women and Prieſts; and both died inglorious; equally hated and deſpiſed by their Enemies and Subjects. The Death of Philip was attended with Circumſtances peculiarly ſuperſtitious and abſurd. Unable to ſtifle the Remorſe he felt on the Review of his Life, and while his Conſcience ſat brooding over the Recollection of his Guilt, he bethought himſelf of ſuch an Expedient to ſet his Mind at Eaſe,

as proved him as infatuated a Bigot as ever exiſted. A legal Writing was drawn formally authenticated by a Lawyer, whereby the King's Confeſſor agreed to inſure his Salvation, on Condition of his punctual Performance of whatever ſhould be enjoined him by way of Penance for his paſt Miſdeeds. The Confeſſor, on the other Hand, conſenting to become anſwerable if there were any Flaws or Deficiencies in the Atonement he was thus authoriſed to preſcribe. The latter Moments of Lewis were more worthy of a Man; but he had ſuffered himſelf during the laſt Years of his Reign, to be ſo groſsly deluded by that reſtleſs Enthuſiaſt Le Tellier, as to throw his whole Kingdom into a moſt violent Fermentation, on account of thoſe abſtruſe Points in Religion, concerning which he was ſo unwiſely ſolicitous to eſtabliſh an Uniformity of Opinion.

THE Hiſtory of theſe two memorable Princes affords the moſt important of all Leſſons to ſucceeding ones: As they remain ſignal Examples that it neither is the Wealth nor Power of a State on which it is to depend for Proſperity, ſo much as on Moderation and Management. Theſe two main Supports they both wanted. And though no Sovereigns ever expended larger Sums, nor could boaſt of better diſciplined Troops, or abler Generals, yet none ever did leſs with ſo many Advantages.

THE Reſemblance between them might ſtill be carried further in many Particulars. Such for Inſtance as the Doubtfulneſs of their perſonal Reſolution, to give it no harſher Term. Philip, during the Battle of St. Quintin,

Quintin, betrayed the moſt ridiculous Apprehenſions; and while his Army was engaging the French, lay proſtrate before an Altar, in Company with ſome Friars. Lewis turned pale in a Council of War, held in his Preſence, where the Majority were for giving Battle to our William the third, then Prince of Orange; whole Forces were ſo poſted, that an Action ſeemed unavoidable. Their Profuſion was nearly ſimilar in many Articles of unneceſſary and uſeleſs Magnificence. In their Tranſactions with other Princes, and Intercourſe with their own People, they both aſſumed an Arrogance that rouſed the Indignation of the former, and baniſhed all Confidence from the latter.

To conclude the Parallel, they both laviſhed the Treaſure and Blood of their Subjects, without the leaſt Shame or Compunction; and what ſtill was of worſe Conſequence, through the Perniciouſneſs of their Example, bequeathed, as it were, to their Succeſſors, a Spirit of Ambition and Tyranny, that entered into all their Councils, and perverted the Talents of all their Miniſters, who too faithfully purſued thoſe Plans of Aggrandiſement, that had already proved no leſs impracticable than unjuſt. In the mean Time, the Welfare of the Public was ſacrificed to Court-Selfiſhneſs and Deſpotiſm, in both Countries. In Spain, the Remains of the induſtrious, labouring Moors (whoſe Numbers were immenſe) were oppreſſed, plundered, and at laſt condemned to univerſal Expulſion. In France, the commercial and trading Part of the Community, were treated with unexampled Severity, and by the moſt infamous Edicts deprived, through

Pretext of State Neceſſity, of all their Acquiſitions, and reduced to unpitied Diſtreſs.

Such, in general, were the Effects of the Politics of thoſe deluded Princes; whoſe Reigns may be juſtly deemed the Date of Oppreſſion and Miſery to their reſpective Kingdoms.

In Imitation of their Sovereigns, a proportionable Share of that Pride and Haughtineſs which flows from erroneous Notions of Grandeur, tainted the Mind, and infected the Behaviour of ſuch among their Subjects as acted by their Commiſſion; whoſe Preſumption and Petulance of Deportment, became remarkably inſufferable, and contributed not a little to make their Monarchs odious. Complaints of this Nature were loud in all Parts of Europe, againſt the Natives of France and of Spain; who by manifeſting, on all Occaſions, an arrogant Perſuaſion, that the Merit and Dignity of their Court and Nation were ſo tranſcendant as to ſilence all Pretences of Compariſon, excited, at laſt, ſo envious and hoſtile an Emulation, as quickly convinced them how dangerous it is to make a Parade of Superiority.

The Miniſters of other Powers, unwilling to bend before them in any Shape, ſtudiouſly ſought Opportunities to mortify them. Thus, while the Spaniſh Armada was impending over England, and had filled the Spaniards with Inſolence, an Engliſh Deputy, at a Congreſs where they pretended to be deſirous of Peace reſolutely anſwered them with thoſe Words (which

Oliver

Oliver Cromwell took many Years after for his Motto) *Pax quæritur Bello*, Peace muſt be earned by War. In the ſame Manner, when Lewis the Fourteenth, intoxicated with Flattery, had taken the Sun for his Device, as a French Ambaſſador was expatiating on his Maſter's Greatneſs, and comparing it to the univerſal Influence of that Luminary, a foreign Miniſter calmly bid him write the Word Phaeton, by Way of Motto under it. Such Replies were frequently neceſſary to ſtop the Torrent of Imperiouſneſs that characteriſed the Spaniards and French, in thoſe Days of their tranſitory Splendor.

THEIR reſpective Courts were then become ſo radically habituated to Miſchief, that no Bars, either of Honeſty or Honour, could ſet any Limits to their Propenſity to contrive and carry on the moſt ignominious Schemes.

WITNESS the infamous Plot of Spain againſt the Republic of Venice, under the Auſpices of that iniquitous Triumvirate, each Member of which muſt have ſtifled every Sentiment of Juſtice and Humanity, before he could have conſented to be acceſſary in ſuch a Scene of Villainy. Witneſs thoſe criminal Intrigues of France at the Ottoman Court, and among the Mal-contents of Hungary, which, without any of that Neceſſity of Self-Preſervation, ſo often pleaded in the Defence or Mitigation of odious Meaſures, from no other Motives than thoſe of groundleſs Malice, involved the imperial Branch of Auſtria in the moſt imminent Danger of abſolute and total Deſtruction.

WHILE

WHILE the Spaniſh Miniſters were employed in contriving iniquitous Projects abroad, their Unfeelingneſs and Inhumanity were not unfrequently experienced at Home; and as if they had determined to make no Diſtinction between Friend and Foe, they often exerciſed unjuſtifiable, and wanton Severities on their moſt uſeful and deſerving Subjects. A Precedent tranſmitted to them, by their Predeceſſors in Office, for upwards of a Century before.

THUS, notwithſtanding their implicit Obedience, and unreſtricted Fidelity, Individuals in Spain had little to boaſt of the Government's Memory of paſt Services; on the contrary, thoſe who had Reaſon to expect the higheſt Encouragements and Rewards, generally met with the moſt trying Mortifications. The cruel Uſage of the great Columbus, the Injuſtices done to the celebrated Cortes, and the injurious Treatment of almoſt all thoſe daring Adventurers, to whoſe Labours and Succeſſes they had ſuch immenſe Obligations, are ſufficient Proofs of what is here aſſerted.

IT muſt, however, be confeſſed, that with all their Faults, the Spaniards, until the Battle of Rocroy, which began their final Downfal, continued indiſputably the firſt Nation in Europe. Their unſhaken Conſtancy in not deſponding under the Burden of univerſal Enmity; their ſteady Perſeverance in maintaining their Ground in every Spot of their Dominions, however diſtant from Relief; their Firmneſs and Reſolution in ſupporting their Claims, and carrying on a fourſcore Years War againſt the Dutch, or rather

againſt

againſt all Europe (the open or ſecret Aſſiſtance of whoſe principal Powers had never failed the latter) their Conqueſts in America; their Victories over the Turks; their Reduction of Portugal; and above all, the Reſpect and Terror they impreſſed upon their Foes, in the midſt of ſo many Difficulties to contend with, all theſe are Facts that render the Spaniards of that Æra a People truly great and memorable.

THEIR Knowledge in naval, and in military Affairs, was, during a long Space of Time, ſuperior to that of all other Nations; whoſe Inſtructors they were, at their own Coſt, in thoſe Department. The fitting out of the famous Armada againſt England, was the nobleſt Effort of the Kind ever known till then. Even the Enterprize itſelf diſcovered no common Courage and Daringneſs. Sir Francis Vere, an able Judge in theſe Matters, commends highly, in his Memoirs, their Excellence and Expertneſs in framing naval Regulations. The great Prince Maurice, and Henry the Fourth of France (no leſs a General than a King) ſpoke with equal Praiſe of their military Diſcipline; acknowledging them their Tutors in the Art of War. The Annals of thoſe Times abound with Specimens of their Abilities and Bravery. Of the firſt, let the Siege of Oſtend bear Witneſs, the Accounts remaining of which (even now that the Science of War has received ſuch additional Improvements) are, by the ableſt Connoiſſeurs, ſtill read with Admiration. Of the laſt, let their intrepid Paſſage of the Scheld into Zealand, ſerve as an Inſtance; an Action never ſurpaſſed in ancient or modern Hiſtory.

THE

THE Truth is, that in thoſe Days, an enthuſiaſtic Ardour for Glory was the ruling Paſſion of the Spaniards; and that notwithſtanding the ill Management of their Miniſters in the internal Departments of Government, yet, as the other European States, with few Exceptions, were almoſt equally faulty in that Particular, they ſtill found Means to retain a ſufficient Degree of Aſcendancy, and to remain formidable to ſuch as acted on no wiſer a Plan than themſelves.

THE French were ſtill plunged in civil Broils. They had little to apprehend from Germany, where the Ties of Conſanguinity and Ambition ſecured them an Intereſt in the Imperial Family. The Trade of England was in its Infancy; ſo was that of Holland. The beſt Parts of Italy, and of the Low Countries, and all Portugal was their own, beſide America. From all theſe they drew a ſufficient Fund to make Head againſt Enemies who had no ſuch Reſources, and who rather acted on the Defenſive; for excepting the Expedition of the Engliſh to Cadiz, we find none of any Note againſt the Spaniards; while they, on the other Hand, were buſy in attacking the French, Engliſh, and Dutch in their own Countries, and keeping them in continual Alarms. But towards the middle of Philip the Fourth's Reign, Spain, already conſiderably weakened by the Miſmanagement of its two preceding Monarchs, was beginning to totter on all Sides; not ſo much from the Decreaſe of territorial Dominion (its Loſſes in that Reſpect were trifling) as from the Increaſe of the Commerce and naval Power of the Dutch and the Engliſh, its moſt dangerous

dangerous Adverſaries; both of whom, in Conjunction with the French, (the firſt under the Miniſtry of Richelieu, the ſecond during that of Mazarin) gave Spain ſo many ſignal Blows, and ſo much enfeebled it, that the Peace of the Pyrenees was at laſt the only Meaſure left to ſave that Kingdom from utter Deſtruction.

HENCEFORWARD we ſee nothing of Spain, for a long Courſe of Years, but a *Magni Nominis Umbra*, the Shadow of a mighty Name. A People of ſcarce any Weight in the political Scale of Europe; and what is very remarkable, though little diminiſhed in the Extent of their Poſſeſſions, unable to face any of thoſe Powers ſingly, againſt the collected Strength of which they had heretofore been an equal Match; nay even glad to accept, and obliged to court the Aſſiſtance of thoſe whom they had formerly oppreſſed, or endeavoured to ſubdue. At the Concluſion of the laſt Century, Spain was enervated to ſuch a Degree, that foreign Powers uſed no Ceremony in dividing it into Portions, as Freebooters do a Prize, without its Conſent or even Knowledge of the different Partitions they were making of its disjointed Provinces.

SINCE the Bourbon Family has been ſeated on the Throne, the Genius and Activity of ſome celebrated foreign Stateſmen, have endeavoured to reſtore Life and Vigour to the Councils of the Spaniſh Court and Nation; but their Efforts ſucceeded no farther than to excite a temporary Spirit of Action, which being unſupported by any ſolid Foundation, and only due

to

to the extraordinary Exertion of their own Abilities, quickly ſubſided, and gave Way to the Torpor that ſeemed to claim a Sort of Preſcription in all their public Concerns; and as if it had been an Innovation of a criminal Nature to have attempted the Eſtabliſhment of a contrary Syſtem, the Authors of theſe active Meaſures were diſcarded, and baniſhed the very Realm, in order, as it were, that they might prove no Obſtruction to Things returning into their former Channel.

TRUE it is, that the Family-pride and Ambition of its Rulers has, of late Years, occaſioned ſome further Motions on the Part of Spain; but the Deſigns they were directed to ſecond, were perſonal and ſelfiſh, and as they had no Connection with the Utility and Intereſt of that Kingdom, they only ſerved to plunge it into endleſs Difficulties, and to impoveriſh a State, already debilitated to the extremeſt Degree; and whoſe Situation, far from being able to afford Countenance to any Projects of external Aggrandiſement, required a long Courſe of pacific Schemes to retrieve it from the ruinous Condition to which a Series of bad Policy had reduced it.

SUCH has been the Fate of the Spaniſh Empire, the former Grandeur of which ſtill dwells on the Memory of the Spaniards; in this Particular not unlike the Turks, whoſe paſt Glory is ſtill the Subject of their preſent Boaſt; and who are vain enough to imagine the World reſpects them as much, as when their Arms were ſpreading Terror through Nations, at that Time, leſs trained and leſs inured to War than themſelves.

A RE-

A Resemblance ſubſiſts between them in ſeveral other Inſtances. Though curtailed in their Limits, they yet are Owners of immenſe Tracts, which they govern much in the ſame Manner; leaving the Direction of Things in the Hands of a few ſupreme Adminiſtrators, and taking but little Notice of the ſecondary Departments of the State, and ſcarce any at all of the lower and remote Parts of the Community; whoſe Welfare, however connected with, and neceſſary for the Support of the higher and more conſpicuous, is moſt miſerably neglected, and in a Manner treated as a Thing of no Conſequence.

Thus they both poſſeſs a great Empire with little Advantage to themſelves, though to the prodigious Emolument of others. Notwithſtanding the Experience of Centuries has ſhewn that many of their Cuſtoms and Inſtitutions, however they might have been proper at firſt, are by the Viciſſitudes that have ſince taken Place, become obſolete and inconſiſtent with the preſent Syſtem of Things, yet a Fondneſs and Veneration for old Cuſtoms, and a Kind of political Superſtition, reſtrains them from embracing new ones. The Turkiſh Militia remains much on the ſame Footing it was at the Taking of Conſtantinople, three hundred Years ago; and the Spaniſh Commerce to America, is ſtill carried on nearly in the Manner ſettled at its Commencement.

Monteſquieu, ſpeaking of the Conqueſt of Greece by the Romans, aſſigns, as one of the Cauſes, the obſtinate Adherence of the Greeks to their ancient Forms

of

of military Diſcipline. *Il ne pût leur venir dans l'Eſprit de renoncer à des Uſages avec les leſquels ils avoient fait de ſi grandes choſes.* They could not conceive the Neceſſity of abandoning thoſe Practices, through Means of which they had done ſuch great Things. Thus the Janiſſaries are ſtill infatuated with the Notion of the ſuperior Excellence of their Scymitars over any other offenſive Arms; and that having been the Weapon of principal Uſe in War, during the triumphant Period of the Turkiſh Empire, they cannot be prevailed on to relinquiſh it for the Muſket and Bayonet, which ſome of their beſt Officers have in vain endeavoured to induce them to give the Preference to. A ſimilar Sort of Deluſion has probably operated, in ſome Meaſure, among the leading Men in Spain. As the Idea of their former Superiority over the Reſt of Europe, is aſſociated with that of their domeſtic Government and Policy at that Time, (to their fatal Miſtakes in which their Ruin is chiefly owing) they poſſibly may have all along aſcribed the Downfall of their Grandeur to other Cauſes than the real; and entertain, therefore, no Thought of deviating from that long beaten Career of erroneous Management in the interior Adminiſtration of their Affairs at Home, the Treatment and Regulation of their Colonies Abroad, and the commercial Communication between both.

THERE is certainly no Country in Europe where the Government is weaker, and leſs Vigour and Activity perceivable in all its component Parts. A ſtated ſyſtematical Courſe of Indolence, ſeems to preſide almoſt every where; and Labour, an Inclination to which appears congenial to the Nature of Mankind in other Nations,

tions, is here looked upon with an Averſion, which the Extremes of Indigence and Miſery are not able to conquer.

THE Aſpect of the Land is, in moſt Parts, the Picture of Wretchedneſs; and no ſmall Portions of many Provinces, conſiſt of uncultivated Deſerts, which, to the Shame of Adminiſtration, might, with a moderate Share of Induſtry, become the Seats of Plenty. Towns and Villages are generally found at a moſt inhoſpitable Diſtance from each other; and the latter often look more like the Receptacles of Mendicants, than the Habitations of Tillers of the Ground: A Race of Mortals in this Country, who take but ſmall Pains, indeed, in their Vocation. Agriculture with them, is little more than ſcratching the Surface of the Earth; and were it not for its admirable Fecundity, and the very ſlight Cultivation it demands, Famines muſt unavoidably be the frequent Lot of a People who think even this Semblance of Labour, a heavy Burden; and are often, from their Neglect of it, in Want of thoſe Supplies of Grain from Abroad, of which they might, with ſome Degree of Care, afford ſo copious an Exportation.

SPAIN is no Country for Travellers. Thoſe Conveniencies and Accommodations of all Kinds that invite the Curious to viſit other Parts, are almoſt utterly unknown in this unfrequented Region; where, as the ſordid Dwellings of Individuals, are but thinly ſcattered, one cannot expect to meet with that Preparation of Neceſſaries which Populouſneſs only can ſuppoſe.

Hence their Inns are Poverty itſelf, and afford nothing but Houſe-Room.

HAD Eraſmus travelled in Spain, he probably would have beſtowed a Colloquy on his Journey, ſtill more curious than his Account of the German Faſhion of entertaining Travellers; a Subject which, (though he has treated it very facetiouſly) would have yielded to the much ampler Fund of Humour, that a Tour in Spain would have afforded him. A French Lady, however, has left a Journal of her Voyage to Madrid, performed about eighty Years ago, which will abundantly ſerve to convey a true Notion of the idle, indolent, and liſtleſs Diſpoſition of the Natives, no material Alterations of their Manners having happened ſince then, if we except the Court and its Dependants, whoſe Etiquette and Modes of Living, have undergone ſome Changes ſince the Acceſſion of the reigning Family; but whoſe Influence is not ſo generally felt as in other Kingdoms, where the Communication between the different Provinces is attended with Facility and Speed. In Spain, the Embarraſſments in the Way of it are ſuch, that the Grandees, whoſe Eſtates lie at any conſiderable Diſtance from Madrid, ſeldom or never viſit them; and the local Knowledge of many among them, reaches but little further than that Metropolis.

FEW indeed are their Inducements to what we call Jaunting. Places of pleaſurable Reſort are unknown; and all Amuſements centre in or near the Capital. But this proceeds, in great Meaſure, from their own Careleſſneſs and Inactivity; were they to be more in Motion, the Country would certainly derive many Benefits

fits from their Preſence; Improvements would be the natural Conſequence every where, and the Inconveniencies that now attend on travelling in Spain, would ſoon be conſiderably leſſened.

But after all, beſide the Eſcurial, and a few, very few other Things, little is to be ſeen worth the Fatigue and Expence of a Journey thither; of this Travellers are ſufficiently ſenſible; its lying Southward of what is called the grand Tour, is not the Diſcouragement that keeps them at a Diſtance. There is a more rational one; which is, that while a Variety of excellent Accounts are daily met with of other Parts of Europe, no tolerable Deſcription has hitherto been publiſhed of Spain; whence they not unfairly conclude it contains very little worthy of Notice.

The firſt Proof that occurs to a Stranger of the Supineneſs and Indolence of the Spaniards, is the Indifference with which a Spaniſh Innkeeper receives his Gueſts, and the Averſeneſs he diſcovers to wait upon them. This, in ſome Places, is carried to ſuch an Exceſs, that though Proviſions are cheap and eaſy to procure, (a Circumſtance that one would naturally imagine he would improve to his Advantage) yet, ſo great is the Lazineſs of many, that even immediate Gain has not Power to rouſe them from Sloth; and a Traveller is not only left to provide his own Suſtenance, but often to dreſs it.

Some have imagined that this general Propenſity to Idleneſs in the Natives of Spain, was owing originally to their long and bloody Wars with the Moors; during

which, ſay they, little could be attended to but fighting, as they were ſo hard preſſed, that nothing but the mountainous Receſſes, they were compelled to take Refuge in, could have ſheltered them from Oppreſſion. Hence they forgot all Manner of Solicitude for the Conveniences and Comforts of Life, and through long Habit, became at laſt, fully contented with thoſe bare Neceſſaries that are earned with little Fatigue.

However plauſible this Argument may ſeem, at firſt Sight, yet, when we reflect that the Moors were not always ſucceſsful in every Quarter, and according to the Chances of War, ſometimes were the ruled, as well as, at other Times, the ruling People, in the various petty Kingdoms; and that conſequently both Nations muſt have lived together intermixed for the Courſe of ſeveral Ages, this naturally ſuppoſes an Extinction of that Ferocity, which poſſibly might have reciprocally ſubſiſted in their primitive Wars. The real Truth is, that theſe alternate Conqueſts and Subjections, were not accompanied with much Barbarity or Devaſtation, eſpecially on the Part of the Moors. Theſe were the mildeſt of Conquerors, and at that Time, the moſt civilized People in the World. The Arts and Sciences ſo flouriſhed among them, that they became the Preceptors of thoſe weſtern Parts of Europe, poſſeſſed by the Deſcendants of the Goths, and of the other northern Nations that deſtroyed the Roman Empire; who adopted their Learning, were highly benefited by the Fruits of their Ingenuity, and even drew the Notion of what is vulgarly, though ignorantly, ſtiled Gothic Architecture from the Moors; much in the ſame Manner that the ancient Romans received their Knowledge and

and Improvements from the Greeks. The additional Conſideration that theſe Moors were induſtrious in the ſupremeſt Degree, and that even now, thoſe Provinces in Spain, which abound moſt in their Poſterity, are the beſt cultivated, and their Inhabitants the leaſt addicted to Idleneſs of any in the Kingdom; this, and the antecedent Remarks, clearly domonſtrate that it is not from the Mooriſh Æra we are to date the Proneneſs of the Spaniards to Indolence; of which they certainly could derive no Examples nor Encouragement from their Conquerors.

If we advert to Facts, we may trace it much higher. Very ancient Writers have left it on Record, that it was deemed honourable among the Spaniards, even in the Time of the Romans, to ſubſiſt on Plunder and Rapine, and that Labour was by no Means in Repute among them. A Truth not leſs known to the Carthaginians, who were perfectly acquainted with the Science of availing themſelves of this Averſion to Toil in the Spaniards; and accordingly drew immenſe Riches from a Country replete with the moſt valuable Mines, and endowed with all Manner of Fertility. This their Predeceſſors the Phœnicians, had done before them. But the Carthaginians went a Step further; and when they had taſted the Sweets of ſo wealthy a Region, they never reſted till they had made it their own by Colonies and Conqueſts. All this could not have been effected if the Inhabitants had been a hardy, laborious Race, firmly ſettled by ſtated Callings and Occupations throughout the various Parts of the Land. In ſuch a Situation, they would have regularly and ſucceſsfully united for the Defence of their Property againſt thoſe

Invaders, it being notorious that the Carthaginians, notwithſtanding their Wealth, and the immenſe Armies it enabled them to maintain, were ſo deficient in military Skill, that none but orderleſs and ill-connected Nations had much Reaſon to fear them; as it conſpicuouſly appeared in the invincible Reſiſtance they met with from thoſe handful of Greeks eſtabliſhed in Sicily, on whom the whole Weight of their Power could never make any Impreſſion.

We may therefore conclude, that the true original Spaniards, as well as the Goths, who by Inter-marriages were ingrafted upon that Stock, were of old, what they who are ſprung from their Blood remain to this Day, a Generation of Men impatient of manual Toil where much Ingenuity and Application are requiſite; and active only in thoſe Scenes that may be tranſacted without a conſtant Rotation of habitual Aſſiduity.

Hence it is they form moſt excellent Soldiers, a Profeſſion for which that Turn of Mind is beſt calculated, which can make a ſudden Tranſition from great Leiſure to uncommon Alertneſs; and though their military Qualifications may ſeem controvertible, when we turn our Eyes to the ſeveral proſperous Invaſions of their Country, yet it is certain they never were ſubdued through Want of Courage, but only from a Defect of Union and good Order among themſelves. Whenever the Government has been tolerably conducted, and a Spirit of Enterpriſe infuſed into the People, by the Vigilance and Induſtry of Adminiſtration, they have made it apparent, that Lethargy and Supineneſs are not ſo inherent in ther Temper, as to prevent them from embracing

bracing Opportunities of ſignalizing themſelves; and this they have occaſionally done with a Readineſs and Alacrity that afford convincing Proofs it is not Toil itſelf, ſo much as the particular Modes of Toiling to which they are averſe; an Aſſertion amply verified by the terrible Hardſhips and Fatigues they ſo chearfully underwent in their numberleſs American Adventures.

Cardinal Alberoni, a penetrating Judge, and who, by having held the Poſt of Prime Miniſter in that Kingdom, had acquired a competent Inſight into their Diſpoſition, uſed often to ſay that the Spaniards were the fitteſt of all Tools for a daring Politician to work with; as their Genius, however ſlow and tardy in ſilent, pacific Undertakings, was ſuſceptible of the keeneſt Ardour and Impetuoſity in thoſe public, national Projects that were attended with Brilliancy and Eclât.

In thoſe Departments of War, where a calm, patient Reſolution is the principal Requiſite, no Nation has ever ſurpaſſed them; their ſteady Coolneſs in Danger, fitting them admirably for Defence; and even on thoſe Occaſions, where the moſt lively Exertion of Valour has been neceſſary, they have proved that the utmoſt Vivacity in military Tranſactions, is by no Means incompatible with the heavieſt Languor in the ordinary Buſineſs and Occurrences of civil, domeſtic Life.

A General, to whoſe Abilities in the Field, Philip the Fifth, firſt Prince of the Bourbon Family in Spain, was not a little indebted for the Preſervation of his Crown, the great Marſhal Vendome, often ſpoke of the Spaniards, as Men endowed with all the ſoldierly Quali-

ties of the different European Troops he was acquainted with: the Sobriety, Obedience, and Docility of the Italians; the ſedate Firmneſs of the Germans; the Fire and Impetuoſity of the French; and the Intrepidity and Reſolution of the Engliſh; and who exceeded them all in that untameable Perſeverance, with which they ſtruggled with Difficulties.

It muſt, however, be granted, that their Repugnance to the tranquil Occupations of peaceable Society, is the Source of many enormous Evils.

As Mendicity is a ſituation very irkſome to haughty Minds, and as there are Abundance of Individuals of this caſt in Spain, reduced by Self-Neglect to a Condition that forces them either to beg or ſteal, the latter, of Conſequence, becomes their Choice. Hence Robberies formerly rendered the Roads in Spain, the moſt inſecure of any in Europe; and through the frequency of Banditti, and their aſſociating in Clans, to carry on a regular Courſe of depredation (much after the Manner deſcribed in Gil Blas) People were often obliged to travel in Caravans, well armed and prepared for a Rencounter.

The high Roads, indeed, are at preſent leſs dangerous, and except when the Harveſt fails, (which by a general Diffuſion of extreme Want, makes the loweſt Sort deſperate) Travelling is become much ſafer, eſpecially in the northern Parts, where ſince the Acceſſion of the Houſe of Bourbon, a greater Intercourſe and Communication has been opened between France and Spain. The Number of Thieves and Vagrants, however,

ver, is not diminiſhed; and though they dare not infeſt the Public as they did before, the Suppreſſion of this Evil has only ſerved to ſharpen their Dexterity in clandeſtine Villanies.

THOSE, on the other Hand, who chuſe to relieve their Neceſſities, by applying to the Liberality of others, are, though not ſo dangerous, yet, if poſſible, a greater Nuiſance than the former. They ſwarm in all Parts; and no Place, however ſacred or reſpectable, is, if a public one, ſecluded from their Intruſion. Inns and Churches particularly are full of them; and whether at their Meals or Devotions, Perſons are liable to their Importunities every where, unleſs within their own Doors.

THEY, who by a narrow Pittance, are juſt placed above the Reach of Hunger, ſeem by their whole Conduct to think Nouriſhment the only Point to be provided for; and are as fond of loitering away their Time as young Spendthrifts, Heirs to large Eſtates. Thus, without any Shame for the Shabbineſs of their Apparel, and without any Care for the Article of Habitation, they avail themſelves of the Clemency of their Winter-Days to baſk in the Sun; and during the Heat of the Summer, they ſleep in the Shade, and keep their Walk for the Night.

THIS Deſcription is not reſtricted to the ignorant and illiterate Part of the Community. Incredible Numbers of thoſe who have been decently educated, and who deſervedly bear the Character of being ſenſible and judicious

judicious in other Reſpects, are equally tainted with this contagious and general Apathy and Neglect of thoſe Means of bettering their Circumſtances, that are ſo eagerly ſought, and ſo ſedulouſly improved, by the Majority of People in more induſtrious Nations.

And yet, if we were to judge of the Spaniards from their Converſation and external Demeanour, their Character would be almoſt unimpeachable. An Air of Gravity and Deliberation reigns in all their Diſcourſes; and their perſonal Deportment is full of Circumſpection and Warineſs not to give the leaſt Offence. In order to ſecure a civil and reſpectful Treatment, they maintain a Reſerve and Statelineſs, which effectually preclude that Strain of looſe, unguarded Familiarity, from whence Diſreſpect and Slight uſually proceed. This Gravity and Decency of Speech and Behaviour, accompany them upon all Emergencies; and when they differ in Opinion, or even when Altercations ariſe of a more ſerious Nature, they are managed with much leſs of that verbal Acrimony, which diſgraces the Diſputes of their Neighbours.

There is but one Inſtance wherein Spaniards are guilty of tranſgreſſing the Bounds of Moderation, and that is when they converſe about their Country and State; notwithſtanding the Feebleneſs of which, and the prodigious Decline of its former Power and Importance, they cannot forbear thinking highly, and ſpeaking haughtily of their national Conſequence; and in Spite of the many Diſappointments in their Miniſterial Meaſures, betray a romantic Confidence in their Valour and Capacity.

Whatever

WHATEVER Zeal the French may boaſt for their King, the Spaniards are not leſs attached to theirs, with this Difference, that in Spain it is a judicious Reſpect, while in France it is an extravagant Affection, carried ſometimes to ſo ridiculous a Height, that Perſons have been known to kiſs the King's Sign Manual with as much Rapture, as a Lover would a Letter ſent him by his Miſtreſs.

LOYALTY, in Spain, is a Submiſſion to the Sovereign, founded on Reaſon. In France, it is a blind Homage inſpired by Paſſion. The Spaniards are good Subjects from Motives of Subordination; the French from partial Warmth for their Prince: whoſe every Deed, they are, in general, too ready to applaud, merely becauſe proceeding from him. Thus, when Lewis the Fourteenth, at the Age of Seventeen, entered the Parliament-Houſe at Paris, booted and ſpurred, with a Horſe-whip in his Hand, and put an End to its Seſſion, (much in the ſame Manner, Cromwell did, about the ſame Time, to that of England) the Bloom of his Youth, the Handſomeneſs of his Perſon, and the Air of Greatneſs he aſſumed on the Occaſion, were more attended to, and won him more Hearts and Favourers among an infatuated People, than the tyrannical Exerciſe of his Power excited Murmur and Indignation among the thinking few who durſt diſſent from the unreflecting multitude.

THE Spaniards have commonly Firmneſs enough to diſapprove of their Monarch's Conduct when they judge it inconſiſtent with his Duty. This is the more eſteemable in them, as of the two, they live in far greater

Subjection

Subjection to their Court, than the French, whoſe Parliaments ſtill retain the Privilege of repreſenting Grievances to the Throne; while in Spain, no ſettled Medium of reſpectable Communication remains between the Nation and its Head; whoſe Knowledge of the Diſcontents that may ariſe in the political Body, can only be conveyed to him by particular Members, acting in a private Capacity, and whoſe Patriotiſm having no public, conſtitutional Warrant for its Exertion, for that Reaſon dares ſeldom go farther than bare Hints and Inſinuations, which have Weight, or meet with Diſregard, as their Authors happen to be in, or out of Favour, with their royal Maſter.

THIS Dignity of Sentiment is peculiarly deſerving of Notice in their Grandees, who are very far from reſembling the French Courtiers in their unlimited Adulation; and in the midſt of their Deference for Majeſty, ſtill preſerve a Remnant of Reverence for themſelves. A Character, to which the Privilege claimed, and aſſerted by them, of being covered even in the King's Preſence, may not improbably have contributed, from that often imperceptible, though not leſs operating Connection between Cauſes and Effects, which frequently renders Cuſtoms ſeemingly unimportant, productive of the moſt material Conſequences. Whenceever it may proceeed, they are ſeldom guilty of that puſillanimous Sacrifice of all Conſiderations to that of Court-Intereſt, for which the primeſt of the Nobility in France, are ſo ſhamefully remarkable.

THE Truth is, there is leſs of Ductility in the Temper of the Spaniards; and however, they may be willing

willing to chime in awhile with the Humours and Manners of the Times, they retain enough of that laudable Miſanthropy, that Contempt for the wrong Notions of the prejudiced Vulgar, to wean themſelves from Mankind when they grow tired of the World. This they have Senſe enough to become, when Age and Experience have convinced them of the Vanity of Parade and Oſtentation, and how little of real, ſolid Enjoyment, there exiſts in that Rotation of exterior Gaieties, whoſe Appearance promiſes ſo much to the Inexpert.

This ſeldom is the Caſe of a French Man of Faſhion, who generally continues to the laſt, true to the Syſtem he ſet out upon during his Youth; unwilling to acknowledge himſelf unqualified and paſt the Date of making a Figure in Life, he ſtill treads the public Stage, though no longer able to do it with any Degree of Decency; and obſtinately perſeveres in acting, as it were, the Spectre of himſelf, in Spite of thoſe mortifying Admonitions he momentarily ſees in the *laſciva decentius Ætas*, the more becoming Sprightlineſs of his Juniors; in whoſe Eyes his Endeavours and Solicitude to imitate their Juvenilities, appear a Sort of tacit Confeſſion that they are the eſſential Qualities, through Means of which, their Reputation is to be eſtabliſhed, and their Riſe effected. Thus, in France, young and old mutually contribute to defeat the Purpoſes of Nature in each other; the young, by a ridiculous Admiration and Encouragement of thoſe affected Airs of Vivacity, that ſit ſo unbecomingly on Age, and by paying their principal Attention to ſuch as can beſt forget their own Seniority. The old, by a ſervile Condeſcenſion

ſion to the Opinions and Humours of the youthful Claſſes, and a needleſs and detrimental Suſpenſion, or rather indeed, a Renunciation of the natural Right of controuling by the Authority annexed to Years (while dignified by a Propriety of Behaviour) the Sallies of Conceit and Licentiouſneſs, and of inculcating thoſe Leſſons of Wiſdom, whoſe beſt and only effectual Recommendation, is the Conduct and Example of the Preceptor.

FROM this great Diſparity of Humours between the French and Spaniards, a Circumſtance ariſes, that ſtrongly denotes the much deeper, and more rooted Attachment of the former to Life and its Concomitances. When that Period is arrived, which according to the uſual Courſe of Nature, deprives Men of the Alertneſs and Vivacity of Body and Mind, abſolutely neceſſary for the Diſpatch of Buſineſs of a public, and national Importance, it is a common Thing for Spaniards of the higheſt Figure, to make a decent Retreat, and ſpend in Calmneſs and Tranquillity, the Evening of their Days.

ACCORDING to Sir William Temple, Fifty is the Term at which a Ceſſation from the Hurry of Affairs ſhould take Place in a wiſe Man's Deſires. Though they may not always be willing to withdraw ſo ſoon, yet neither can they be cenſured for waiting till Age and Infirmities compel them to Retirement. Some of them, to ſanctify their Plan of Solitude, have entered into holy Orders, or aſſociated themſelves to ſome religious Fraternity, to atone by the Purity of their latter Lives, for the Irregularity of their former. Thus

the

the celebrated Duke of Lerma, after having acted the Part of Prime Miniſter many Years, retired at laſt, and dedicated the Remainder of his Time to Devotion; adding to the Dignity of Cardinal, with which he had long been decorated, the Duty of Prieſthood, the Functions of which he daily performed in the moſt exemplary Manner. His Rival and Succeſſor in the Miniſtry, Count Duke d'Olivares, as he was ſtiled, cloſed his latter Scene alſo in a pious Receſs. We find many ſuch Inſtances in Spain, of Perſons in high Stations abandoning the World; their Kings themſelves not excepted; witneſs the famous Charles the Fifth, who ſet, in a Manner, the Precedent, by diveſting himſelf of Royalty, and living an abſolute Recluſe two full Years before his Death. Of latter Days, Philip the Fifth reſigned the Crown to his Son Lewis; after whoſe Demiſe, he was with Difficulty prevailed upon to reſume it; ſo powerfully had both theſe Monarchs, neither of whom was born in Spain, imbibed, through long Uſe and Habit, the Notions and Temper of the Nation into which they had been adopted.

Some indeed have imputed theſe Retreats from the World to Dotage and Bigotry, rather than to a reaſonable Inclination to enjoy the Peace and Serenity of a philoſophical Retirement, after the Buſtle of Life was over; but, without abſolving the Spaniards entirely from this Charge, they who are ſo ready to undervalue them, would do well to reflect, that in other Countries, where the Romiſh Religion is as prevalent as in Spain, and the People are as ſuperſtitious, we do not find they reſemble the Spaniards in the above-mentioned Particularity, which, however, by a Parity of Reaſoning,

ſoning, they ought to do, if ſuch a Conduct was merely the Effect of Superſtition.

THE Truth is, that Ambition is a far more durable Paſſion in the Individuals of ſome other Nations, eſpecially in the French. Richelieu, Mazarin, Colbert, Louvois, and others, kept their Poſts to the laſt; and even the venerable Fleury left not the Helm in the very Extremity of Age.

NOTWITHSTANDING a fervent Adherence to the Ideas infuſed by their religious Tenets, the better Sort of the Spaniards have Impartiality enough to do full Juſtice to the Merit of others who happen to be of a different Perſuaſion. As they are natively Men of keen Penetration, and from the Circumſpectfulneſs of their Diſpoſition, dive deeply into Characters, ſo when, by a patient and profound Examination, they diſcover the Worthineſs of any Perſon, they are never backward in acknowledging it, and in making him ſenſible of their Eſteem and Readineſs to ſerve him. This was eminently exemplified in the Caſe of the Earl of Briſtol, the Engliſh Ambaſſador at the Court of Madrid in the Reign of our James the firſt. That Nobleman, though engaged in a Negociation by no Means acceptable to the Spaniſh Nobility, the Treaty of Marriage between their Infanta, and our Charles the firſt, then Prince of Wales, and notwithſtanding he had often convinced them, by undoubted Proofs of his Averſion to the Romiſh Religion, and had ſignally demonſtrated his Zeal for the Proteſtant, yet as he had always behaved with Uprightneſs and Candour in the Duties of his Embaſſy, and had diſplayed an equal Fund of Integrity

grity and Spirit both in his public and private Intercourſe, ſo great and real was the Regard and Reſpect he had obtained at that Court, that when he was recalled, and it was foreſeen that the Weakneſs of his Maſter would ſacrifice him to the malicious Enmity of the Duke of Buckingham, the King nobly proffered him a Rank and Income in Spain equal to thoſe he poſſeſſed in England, together with the fulleſt Liberty of Conſcience.

The Firmneſs and Probity of Lord Clarendon, who was ſent by Charles the ſecond, during his Exile, to treat in his Favour with the Spaniſh Miniſtry, were attended likewiſe with the moſt honourable Marks of Diſtinction; and the moſt flattering Aſylum was offered to his Acceptance, if ever he ſhould, by an Increaſe of his Maſter's Calamities, or his own Misfortunes, be reduced to the Condition of wanting one.

Lord Cottington, who choſe in thoſe diſtracted Times to leave the Scenes of Confuſion in his own Country, and end his Days in Spain, abundantly experienced the beneficent Hoſpitality of the Spaniards; and needed not have paid them the Compliment of a Conformity with their Religion, to have ſecured himſelf the moſt gracious Reception.

If the Spaniards are partial to any Nation, it is certainly towards the Engliſh; between whoſe Temper and their own a Sympathy ſubſiſt in many reſpects; and for whom, in general, they ſeem to entertain a much higher Degree of Eſteem than for any other. Political Views may poſſibly influence them in our Behalf; as it

is a common Saying among them, that provided they are at Peace with England, it is no matter if they are at War with all the Reſt of the World.

But from whatever Motive this favourable Diſpoſition to us may ariſe, our Traders among them have, on the Eruption of ſome late Wars, found a Friendlineſs and Punctuality in the Obſervance of their private Agreements, which reflect the higheſt Honour on their national Fidelity as Individuals, as the unfair, oppreſſive Meaſures purſued by thoſe in Power almoſt amounted to downright Acts of Hoſtility. Such a Conduct plainly ſhewed that, whatever might be the Politics and Deſigns of the Court, the Hearts of the Nation were ſtill with us, and deſired no Violation of that Amity which the reciprocal Intereſt of both People required.

To this ſuperior Opinion in Favour of our Countrymen, is owing their implicit Confidence in our commercial Agents in that illicit Trade carried on between both Nations in the Weſt-Indies. A Confidence they repoſe in no other People; whoſe Cargoes are examined circumſtantially, and minutely before their Delivery, while ours are taken on Truſt, without the ſmalleſt Heſitation. Their Privateers, during War, place the ſame Faith in the Words of our Seamen, the Veſſels under whoſe Command happen to fall into their Hands. And whatever Declarations or Promiſes are made on our Side, relative to the Lading, or the Ranſom of the Prize, they pay the fulleſt Credit to them. All theſe are weighty Motives to preſerve our Reputation of Veracity unſtained, and never to ſwerve from

that

that Rectitude of Conduct of which their Behaviour to us is so honourable a Reward.

THEIR Notions of our Probity and sincere Dealing are equalled by those they have often manifested of our Magnanimity and Courage: Of this not a more elucidating Proof can be given than the Sollicitude of their Governors, and other naval and military Officers in their South American Dominions, at the Time of Admiral Anson's Expedition to those Parts. Notwithstanding they were informed of the Disasters which had befallen our Squadron, they still kept the most watchful Look-out for its shattered Remains; well knowing, said they, that 'till the Whole was gone to Wreck, the English would persevere in the Enterprize they had begun.

THEY thought as highly of this Nation even in the Days of their Strength and Glory. Philip the second, who was indubitably the most powerful Monarch of his Age, tho' his Ambition had raised him open and secret Foes throughout all Europe, took not his celebrated Motto, *omnes contra nos et nos contra omnes*, all against us and we against all, till Queen Elizabeth had declared herself his Enemy. Intimating thereby, that he thought more of the Enmity of England than of any other Nation; an Opinion, we may add, that was abundantly justified by the many famous Events that fill the Annals of that Time, and proved so fatal to the Designs of that haughty, restless Prince.

THE respectful Mention made of our Countrymen by Don Juan de Ulloa in his excellent Account of

Spaniſh America, is a recent Proof of the favourable Light they are held in by ſenſible, enlightened Spaniards; and is at the ſame Time a Teſtimony in our Favour the more to be valued, as it proceeds from the Pen of the moſt intelligent and judicious Writer Spain has of long Time produced.

To this equitable Temper, that leads them to do Juſtice to Merit in whoever poſſeſſes it, they add that nobleſt of all ſocial Qualifications, a Mind full of Gratitude for Benefits received; and are amply endued with that laudable Pride which glories in making Returns far ſuperior to the Claims of thoſe on whom they are conferred. Among many other Inſtances, that of Gondomar, the Spaniſh Ambaſſador at the Court of our James the firſt, may be cited: Who when returned to his native Country, retained a Senſe of the Civilities and kind Treatment he had met with in England, that animated him, on all occaſions, in Behalf of our Countrymen; many of whom found him a zealous Advocate at Court, and a munificent Patron in thoſe Difficulties and Diſtreſſes which itinerant Strangers are often liable to. By this Exertion of Benignity to Individuals in their private Affairs, atoning, in ſome Meaſure, for the many Miſchiefs he had done to this Country in his public Character, during the Reign of that feeble Monarch, whom he made the perpetual Dupe of his ſuperior political Capacity.

Gratitude naturally ſuppoſes Generoſity; and of this the Spaniards have exhibited remarkable Specimens on ſundry Emergencies. On that eſpecially when they beſtowed their Protection on our Charles the ſecond, at a Time

a Time when both he and they were in very unproſperous Circumſtances. He, a wandering Exile; they, preſſed on all Sides, and driven to the Brink of Deſtruction. Yet, even in this calamitous Situation, Philip the fourth, influenced by his Miniſter Don Lewis de Haro (a Man of the nobleſt Sentiments) had the Magnanimity and Reſolution to incur a further Riſk by aſſiſting that unfortunate Prince. And tho' he durſt not eſpouſe his Cauſe in that effectual Manner he would have done, had the Condition of his Affairs permitted him to have followed his Inclinations, yet he openly and avowedly commiſerated his Caſe, and in Defiance of the Frowns of the ruling Powers in England (whoſe Vengeance was well known to conſiſt in more than empty Menaces) took reſpectful Notice of his Perſon, and bountifully relieved his Neceſſities. This was doing a great deal at a Seaſon when the leaſt Token of Partiality in his Favour, was ſufficient to irritate that furious vindictive Party which had the Strength of this Nation in their Hands, and had fully ſhewn they were inexorably determined to exert it to the utmoſt againſt all who provoked their Diſpleaſure.

This Friendlineſs and Generoſity of the Spaniſh Monarch, tho' it proved intrinſically of not much Conſequence to Charles, was, however, a Freedom the French Miniſtry was too intereſted, and too narrow-ſpirited to aſſume. Byaſſed by the moſt ſordid Motives, they treated him with a Slight and Indifference abſolutely criminal, when we conſider his Affinity to the Blood of their Kings, and that he was Grandſon to their Henry the Fourth. A Behaviour not more to their

Diſhonour, than his not reſenting it, on the Change of his Fortune, was advantageous to their Intereſt.

And here one may further obſerve, that notwithſtanding the French boaſt of their Country's being *l'Azile des Rois mal-heureux*, the Aſylum of unhappy Kings, yet their Court ſeldom patronized any from pure, unſelfiſh Views; and generally had ſome favourite End to compaſs by their pretended Generoſity. Of this their Conduct to our unhappy James the ſecond, and thoſe to whom he bequeathed his Pretenſions, is a recent Illuſtration.

Far ſuperior, in their political Intercourſe with our Nation, is the Character of the Spaniards to that of the French. It is true that during the Reign of Philip the ſecond, unwarrantable Deſigns found Admittance into that Prince's Councils: But the dreadful Policy of thoſe bloody Times afforded them (if it were poſſible) ſome Sort of Countenance: As by the Perpetration of the many flagitious Deeds, from which no Part of Europe was exempt, the Minds of Men were become familiariſed with the moſt iniquitous Scenes, and reconciled, as it were, to the moſt atrocious Schemes of Perfidy. But ſince the Cloſe of that Century, which terminated a little after his Death, this ſanguinary Diſpoſition gradually ſubſided; and notwithſtanding ſome Remains of it ſtill broke out occaſionally in other Countries, we had no Complaints of any ſuch Nature to make of the Spaniards; who tho' fully devoted to their Religion and to their Sovereign, were ſeldom or never guilty of deceitful, treacherous Dealings among our People, for the Sake of either;

and

and whenever they acted the Part of Enemies, did it openly; and without underhand, inſidious Practices againſt the perſonal Safety or Welfare of our Kings. So well were the Actors in the Gunpowder-plot aware of this Diſpoſition in the Spaniards, that however they knew them to be zealous in the Romiſh Cauſe, they never thought fit to intruſt any of them with the leaſt Intimation of their real Deſigns.

But the French Miniſtry has ever had little of that Delicacy which ſuffers not the Differences between oppoſite Nations to degenerate into ſpiteful, ſiniſter, ungenerous Enmity. Nay, even at a Time of profound Peace, in the latter Part of the Reign of our Charles the firſt, they could not refrain from their Diſpoſition to Miſchief; and employed their Emiſſaries in ſowing the Seeds of the moſt fatal Diviſion between him and his Subjects, and in exciting them, by the baſeſt Methods, to thoſe domeſtic Feuds of which the Cataſtrophe was ſo tragical to both.

This Elevation of Soul, common among Individuals of any Rank in Spain, flows from that Self-eſteem and Reſpect they are forward enough to demonſtrate by their Words and Actions; which Eſtimation of their own Worth dwells ſo forcibly in their Nobility and Gentry, as deeply to intereſt their Pride in the Preſervation of their Honour: As their Notions of it are nice and refined, they are punctiliouſly careful, and ſolicitous to keep it whole, and unſullied by any Deviation from the ſtricteſt Maxims of Integrity either in public, or in private Affairs.

Such, in general, is the Frame of Mind of the better Sort in Spain; whoſe Conduct alſo, in Matters of a ſecondary Conſideration, is of a Tenour that well agrees with the Loftineſs of their Ideas and Sentiments; with which they are too much elated, to be vain of thoſe leſs eſſential Advantages, thoſe Accompliſhmenſs calculated for the mere Purpoſes of Pleaſure and Paſtime, of which ſome of their Neighbours are apt to make ſo fulſome and tedious a Parade.

Actuated by the ſame Principles of Serioufneſs and Gravity, they prize not ſo much a ſplendid Imagination as a ſound Judgment; and deem a ſolid Character far preferable to a brilliant one. They are not therefore ſo fond of thoſe Converſations whoſe ſole End is to divert and amuſe, without affording a proportionable Share of Uſe and Inſtruction: And Sallies of Wit, which, however, they are eminently capable of, and remarkably abound in, are much leſs in Requeſt among them, than ſenſible and judicious Reflections.

It is a Pity their Addiction to Books and Literature ſhould be ſo moderate as it has confeſſedly been for many Years. Were they more ſedulous in theſe Reſpects, their Ingenuity would undoubtedly enable them to make a Figure in the Republic of Letters equal to that of any Nation. But their general Negligence in the Cultivation of them, reduces Individuals to the Neceſſity of drawing moſt of their Knowledge from their own Fund of Experience and Obſervation. Which, notwithſtanding they are excellent Sources, and far exceed in Purity of Truth and Certitude the Lucubrations of the Cloſet alone, cannot compare with that

that ſuperior Extent and Profoundneſs of acute and thorough Diſcernment which Reading and Meditation give to thoſe who are adequately converſant with the World.

HENCE, tho' the Spaniſh Gentlemen are not deficient in frequent Manifeſtations of an excellent Underſtanding, yet it is chiefly Nature alone that ſhines in them with little or no additional Poliſh. And tho' they are often happy in a Fecundity of Thoughts pleaſingly enough expreſſed, ſtill it is evident, not from Want of Energy, but of Correctneſs in their Manner, that a claſſical Elegance of Stile is not a Thing they very anxiouſly aim at either in their Writings or Diſcourſe.

ELOQUENCE, however, being much more the Conſequence of a bright and lively Imagination than of Labour and Study, as they are Men of quick and ſprightly Fancies, and as the Gravity of their Demeanour, by proving a ſeaſonable Check on the Vivacity and Flow of their Ideas, adds Weight and Dignity to their Delivery, it muſt be acknowledged that they poſſeſs the Gift of Speaking in a very ample Degree.

SOME Critics have paſſed unfavourable Judgments on their Language, as being often perplexed and embarraſſed with figurative Modes of conveying Thoughts, which ought, for the Facility of Comprehenſion, to be cleared of all unneceſſary Concomitances, and whoſe principal Ornament is Perſpicuity. But allowing for that Intermixture of the Mooriſh Idiom and Taſte, which

which could not fail to happen among People ſo long blended together as they and the Spaniards were, it would be unjuſt to deny that it ſtill retains in other Reſpects as intimate an Analogy with the Genius and Methods of Expreſſion of its Parent the Latin Tongue, as any of the European Dialects derived from it.

THE Spaniſh Language is undoubtedly as nervous and emphatical, and more pompous and majeſtic than any modern one: And tho' particularly remarkable for a Multitude of proverbial Phraſes, yet they are conceived in a Strain that raiſes them above Vulgarity; and what is more deſerving of Notice, are by the fertile Invention of the Natives kept in a perpetual State of Renovation; as a Spaniard has the peculiar Talent of conferring upon them an Air of Originality, by the Spirit and Novelty of the Turn he gives them.

THE Spaniſh Tongue has a variety of Advantages over the French and Italian. The Regularity of its Conſtruction far exceeds that of either; which alone is an Object of eſſential Importance: It moves, as it were, with ſtricter Diſcipline, and cloſer Order; and yet is not leſs abundantly ſtored with the richeſt Diverſity of Words and Phraſes, exhibiting an ample Scope for the Range of Imagination, and the Choice of Judgment. But above all, what neither of the above Languages can claim any Compariſon in, it contains a due Meaſure of Strength and Harmony; and is equally removed from that affected Softneſs and Effeminacy of Sound which an endleſs Termination in Vowels produces in the Italian, and from that uncouth Singularity

rity of Pronunciation in the French, which admits of no Rules but thoſe of Caprice and Cuſtom, and renders half the Letters of no Uſe and Signification in Speech; to the great Diſguſt and Perplexity of all who learn that Language.

THE State of Literature in Spain is like that of the Country, low, poor, and neglected. The Truth is, that the Minds of Men are narrowed by Superſtition, and the Efforts of Genius circumſcribed by the Terrors of the Inquiſition, and the many other ſpiritual Fetters with which the Tyranny of the Clergy holds the People in the moſt ſlaviſh Subjection.

HENCE thoſe Studies that flouriſh moſt in Spain are ſuch as yield no Profit to the Community, or even Pleaſure to their Proſecutors, the dry, unintereſting Niceties of ſcholaſtic Divinity; which far from being of any Service to Mankind, have often proved the Occaſion of much Animoſity and Diviſion in the eccleſiaſtical World.

SPAIN may boaſt of having produced ſome of the moſt famous of theſe School Diſputants. Eſpecially Lemos and Molina, who about the Commencement of the laſt Century filled half the Univerſities of Europe with their idle Diſquiſitions concerning Grace and Predeſtination, and other like Matters of the moſt abſtruſe, inſcrutable Nature. The Peace of the Romiſh Church was ſo diſturbed by the Difference of Opinions that enſued, and the *Odium Theologicum*, the Abhorrence which diſſenting Divines held each other in, roſe to ſuch

ſuch a Degree of Wrath and Fury, that the Court of Rome was obliged to interpoſe between both Parties, in order to bring about a Pacification; which, however, was never thoroughly effected; the Diſunion and Schiſm occaſioned by theſe abſurd Contentions ſubſiſting at this Day.

Nor ſhould it be forgotten that Spain is the Fountain-head from whence ſcholaſtic Philoſophy, as well as Divinity, overflowed the Remainder of Europe. The Moors, who derived their Opinions and Cuſtoms from the Arabians, like them delighted in Subtleties, and in the Examination and Solution of intricate Queſtions and Problems. Ariſtotle, therefore, of all the Greek Writers, was the moſt acceptable to their Taſte; and they tranſlated into Arabic, for the Uſe of their Students, and made Comments without Number upon, the logical Parts of his Writings: The Reputation of which ſpread from them (who were then, as already obſerved, the moſt poliſhed People in Europe) to all their Neighbours, and was thus diffuſed throughout Chriſtendom.

Had the genuine Works of that great Philoſopher been the real Subject of this univerſal Application, it is probable the Schools of Europe would, in time, have been ſubſtantially benefitted by that Treaſure of ſolid Senſe and deep Underſtanding, with which they are indiſputably repleniſhed. But Ariſtotle himſelf was almoſt out of the Queſtion. He remained unread, and in a Manner unknown: The Intelligence of his original Language was, in thoſe ignorant Ages, a Prodigy;

gy; and no Verſions ſubſiſted but of the Portions brought into Vogue, as above mentioned, tho' they were far from being the moſt valuable of his Compoſitions. But even theſe were very little peruſed: The great Objects of Attention were thoſe endleſs Treatiſes to which they gave Occaſion, on Matters totally remote from any Kind of Improvement or Utility whatever.

It ſeems almoſt inconceivable, in this enlightened Æra, what a ſtupid Veneration was, during the Courſe of ſeveral Centuries, paid to the unmeaning, unintelligible Jargon that paſſed in thoſe Days for philoſophical Knowledge. It was therefore no Wonder that Men of the World, who had Penetration enough to ſee through the Futility of ſuch empty Lucubrations, left them entirely to Eccleſiaſtics and the Inhabitants of Cloyſters, the Soil where they grew and proſpered beſt, and from whence they are far from eradicated even at this Day.

Nevertheless, as no other Sort of Learning was then thought of, theſe ſenſeleſs Inveſtigations were proſecuted with the moſt ſhameful Aſſiduity, and conſidered as Occupations of the ſublimeſt Nature and Importance by the whole Body of Churchmen, who in thoſe obſcure, illiterate Periods, were the only Claſs of People on whom it was judged neceſſary to beſtow any Education.

This, to ſay the moſt of it, conſiſted of little more than a bare Underſtanding of the wretched Latin into which

which the Scriptures were tranſlated, uſually called the Vulgate. The favourite Studies of their riper Years were thoſe ſcholaſtic Diſquiſitions, which, inſtead of inſtructing, ſerved only to croud the Mind with a confuſed Multitude of logical and metaphyſical Terms, and Definitions, of which the Meaning was inexplicable.

In ſuch Purſuits, however, whole Lives were expended; and they who moſt excelled in ſyllogiſtical Wranglings were held in the higheſt Admiration. Hence thoſe bombaſtic Epithets conferred on Thomas Aquinas, Scotus, and Occam. The firſt of whom was ſtiled the angelical, the ſecond the ſubtile, and the third the irrefragable Doctor. Men who, together with many others of their diſputant Brethren, might, with the ſtricteſt Propriety, be ſaid to have been born for the Times; and who, in a reaſonable Age, would have been Subjects of Deriſion. Excepting the firſt, who was alſo a Caſuiſt, and whoſe principal Performance, entitled the *Summa*, is ſtill read, there was not the leaſt Spark of Genius, Utility, or Entertainment in the whole of their immenſe Compoſitions: Which are now conſigned to Oblivion, and the Memory of their Authors to Contempt, unleſs in ſome of the Spaniſh or Flemiſh Univerſities.

Such were the Literati of thoſe Days. Such the Men who preſided over the Underſtandings of Mankind, and directed what was proper to be taught and learned. Through their Management of the intellectual Faculties, calm, diſpaſſionate Reaſoning was abſolutely baniſhed; and a Spirit of Altercation and Controverſy introduced

troduced that rendered Men much leſs zealous in the Inveſtigation of Truth, than in the Defence of their Opinions, well or ill grounded, and chiefly ſolicitous in the Refutation of their Opponents. Againſt theſe all the Weapons were uſed that Chicanery could deviſe, all Artifices were lawful, Subterfuges, Equivocations, Quirks and Quibbles of all Sorts. So litttle, indeed, were they anxious about any Thing, but forming their Pupils to Tenaciouſneſs and Obſtinacy, that the firſt Maxim inculcated in their Schools was that well known Line, not yet diſuſed in ſome Colleges abroad,

Saepe nega ; concede parum ; diſtingue frequenter.

Often deny ; make few Conceſſions, and frequent Diſtinctions.

Under Men wholly taken up with ſuch Avocations, and who rated every one's Merit according to his Degree of Expertneſs therein, little was to be expected in Favour of polite Literature, which accordingly, as a Treaſure of which the Poſſeſſor knows not the Worth, lay for Centuries, depoſited like uſeleſs Lumber in their Libraries ; happy to have eſcaped, in part, the Deſtruction to which the barbarous Infatuation of ſome pious Bigots devoted the moſt precious Remains of claſſical Antiquity.

On the Revival of Letters, as the Greek and Roman Authors became the ſole Standards, not only of Politeneſs and Elegance in Writing, but alſo of Truth and Reaſoning, Ariſtotle, inſtead of loſing Ground, gained

ed an Acceſſion of Strength and Authority in thoſe Matters preciſely, wherein he leaſt deſerves Commendation, and is moſt erroneous. Several Univerſities, that of Paris eſpecially, gave his philoſophical Opinions ſuch an excluſive Right of Preference to all others, as to make Decrees that on his own Works alone Lectures ſhould be read by the Profeſſors to their Pupils. To which Abſurdity Boileau humourouſly alludes in one of his Satires, where he introduces a Pedant fully perſuaded that,

" *Sans Ariſtote*
" *La Raiſon ne voit goute, et le bon Sens radote.*"

Without Ariſtotle Reaſon is blind, and good Senſe a Dotard.

As Mankind runs generally from one Extreme to another, the Ancients, who for Ages had been neglected and almoſt forgotten, were now treated with ſo much Reverence, that equal Homage was paid to their Beauties and to their Errors, and both were copied with ſimilar Exactitude.

A WHOLE Century elapſed between the Reſurrection of claſſical Studies, and the Dawn of true Philoſophy; which 'till the Days of Bacon in England, Deſcartes in France, and Galilei in Italy, lay quite enveloped in authoriſed Prejudices, from which it was become unlawful and dangerous to depart; as the Treatment of the two laſt too well exemplified. Thus the Ptolemaic Syſtem triumphed over the Copernican; and the very

ry faulty and incorrect Charts of that ancient Geographer (which to do him Juſtice were admirable for his Time) continued in Vogue till the Days of Ortelius, who flouriſhed towards the latter End of the ſixteenth Century.

Tho' Spain comes in for a proportionable Share of literary Fame in many of the polite and elegant Branches, yet it has hitherto made no capital Figure in the Sciences; nor in thoſe Parts of Philoſophy that claim the moſt attentive and ſerious Inquiry; and wherein an unlimited Freedom and Energy in the Uſe of Reaſon, is the only Medium whereby to arrive at Truth. Such Diſquiſitions would not be tolerated from a Spirit of Bigotry; and the Sciences have been prevented from proſpering among them, by a rooted Habit of Indolence, and a Diſlike to thoſe Purſuits that require an Activity of Application. It is owing to theſe Cauſes that Spain has ſent forth no ſuch Men for the Inſtruction of the World, as England, France, Italy, and Germany.

In Matters of Wit, and in that Species of Ingenuity where a complete Knowledge of the Ways of Men, and an acute Inſight into the Paſſions incident to human Nature are the Baſis of Succeſs, their Writers have ſhewn the Way to all the Moderns. Cervantes ſtands unequalled to this Day. In Hiſtory too, where Gravity, Pomp, and Elegance of Stile are next to Veracity, the moſt neceſſary Qualifications, their Merit is eminent. It is no Exaggeration to ſay, that Solis is hardly exceeded by any Hiſtorian, ancient or modern. But yet, as if the Genius of Superſtition was inſepar-

able from a Spaniard, they both betray a Propenſity to it that is the more ſurpriſing, as neither of their Subjects had the leaſt Need of any ſuch Ingredient to ſecure a favourable Reception, or ſeemed calculated to give it Admittance. The former, in a Work of pure Pleaſantry, his Don Quixote, cannot help inſerting a long Story of the Aſſiſtance a Chriſtian Slave received from the Virgin Mary, in eſcaping from Algier; and the latter, in his celebrated Hiſtory of the Conqueſt of Mexico, introduces the Apoſtle James, the tutelary Saint of Spain, fighting for the Spaniards againſt the Mexicans; much in the ſame Strain that Livy repreſents Caſtor and Pollux engaged in Battle on the Side of the Romans.

In Poetry they have not been ſo happy. They have no Epic Poem to place on a Level with thoſe of Taſſo, Arioſto, or Milton. Gongora, the moſt celebrated of all their Lyric Poets, is abſolutely Fuſtian; and according to Horace, "*Dum vitat Humum Nubes et In-*"*ania Captat*," While he ſhuns Vulgarity becomes unintelligible. Even his own Countrymen have ſtiled him the Marvellous, and few of them are able to read him with any Satisfaction, from the Difficulty of comprehending him.

In Dramatic Compoſitions their Fame is not great. Lopes de Vega, their beſt Writer, whatever his Deſerts may appear in Spain, is not mentioned out of his own Country with that Applauſe a Shakeſpeare, a Corneille, a Racine ſo deſervedly command; many of whoſe Performances have been honoured with Tranſlations,

lations, while thoſe of Vega are confined to his own Language. Tho' to do him Juſtice, both Engliſh and French Writers have borrowed many uſeful Hints and Thoughts from his numerous Works.

RAPIN the Jeſuit, in treating of the Stage, aſcribes to the Spaniards and Italians a quicker Diſcovery of the Foibles and Ridicules of People, and a nicer Feeling and Diſcernment of the various Characters of Men, than was poſſeſſed by the French. Such an Obſervation ſeems the more ill-founded and unſeaſonable, as he made it at a Time when Moliere, his Countryman, had brought French Comedy to the utmoſt Perfection. It is true enough that both the Spaniards and Italians, eſpecially the laſt, have a particular Talent in exciting Laughter by a droll and ludicrous Repreſentation of the common Occurrences in Life; and in exhibiting, with a mirthful Vein of Buffoonry, the Outſide of Things. But in Refinement, and Delicacy of Thought, in Neatneſs and Decency of Expreſſion, they approach neither to the Engliſh nor the French. And the worſt Performances among theſe, are preferable in thoſe Reſpects to the beſt of theirs; which notwithſtanding their Concomitances of Wit and Merriment, would not, on account of their Deficiency in Taſte and good Manners, meet with the Approbation of a polite Audience in France or in England.

THE Fact is that few Spaniſh or Italian Plays will bear Reading, much leſs Tranſlating; and that they are ſeldom fit to entertain any but the Mob.

In Spain, the Management of the Theatre is wretched to a moſt pitiful Degree, furniſhing no unfrequent Exhibitions of thoſe prepoſterous Scenes, ſo much in Vogue two Centuries ago in Europe: Wherein the moſt ſolemn Tranſactions of Religion, and the moſt ſerious Paſſages in the Goſpel, were introduced on the Stage, and acted as ſo many Farces. This muſt be thought the more ſurpriſing, as the Spaniſh Eccleſiaſtics, however ignorant and illiterate, preſerve that native Gravity in their Deportment, and that Exemplarineſs in their Conduct, which according to the Rule of Appearance, denote a juſter Senſe of Propriety than is conſiſtent with a Toleration of ſuch Indecencies. And as their Influence and Authority are ſo conſiderable, one is apt to imagine that they might, and therefore ought, long ſince to have put a Stop to them. But poſſibly the Indolence of the ſecular, and the Bigotry of the regular Clergy is ſuch, that the firſt, content with the Income of their Benefices, give themſelves but little or no Concern about the Liberties that are taken with the exterior Parts of Religion, as long as People remain ſubmiſſive and implicit in their Belief; and the ſecond, tho' more auſtere in their Notions, yet as many of their own Practices are equally ridiculous, perceive not ſo readily the Impropriety and Shamefulneſs of ſuch Proceedings.

These dramatic Paſtimes, mean and contemptible as they are, ſtill ingroſs the Leiſure and Attention of the higheſt, as well as of the loweſt Claſſes; whoſe Paſſion for Eaſe and Inactivity qualifies them to put up

with any ſedentary Amuſement however prepoſterous and inſipid.

They have ſcarce more than one deſerving the Epithet of active, and that is their Bull Feaſts: The Danger and Bloodineſs of which Diverſion, if it may be ſo termed, perfectly ſuits their romantic Diſpoſition; as it recalls to their Imagination the Tilts and Tournaments for which their Anceſtors were ſo famous. Two Things are worthy Notice on theſe Occaſions, the Agility diſplayed by the Actors in theſe Feſtivals, and the Quality of, ſometimes, no few of them. One would think the Spaniards meant them as Proofs, the firſt, that their Averſion to Labour ariſes not from a Defect of Spirit and Vivacity, the ſecond, that all Manner of Opportunities of ſignaliſing their Intrepidity were ever welcome to Individuals of all Ranks throughout the Nation. Leſs indulgent Spectators will perhaps be inclined to conſider them both rather as Inſtances of a frantic Depravity of Taſte, and the laſt, in particular, as a Meanneſs equal to that of which the Roman Nobility was guilty in the Days of their Degeneracy, when they forgot their Dignity ſo far as to become Gladiators, and encounter wild Beaſts for the Entertainment of the Public.

Such are in general, the Recreations in Spain: A Country where none but the Natives can find much Delight, or Satisfaction, from the Diſtance and Shyneſs obſerved towards Strangers, and the Inconveniencies that are perpetually ariſing from the Lazineſs of the People, and the Uncleanlineſs of Places; Evils

that are ſeverely felt, the laſt principally, by thoſe in whoſe Countries Neatneſs is looked upon as an indiſpenſable Requiſite. Madrid, their Metropolis, and the Reſidence of their Kings, is rendered often almoſt peſtiferous by exceſſive Filth; and it is but very lately they have ſought any Remedy by regularly cleanſing the Streets, and uſing ſome other Precautions.

So culpable a Negligence in what requires ſo juſt a Share of Attention, Cleanlineſs and Convenience, ill agrees with that Splendour and Magnificence of which their Grandees make ſo pompous a Parade; and with that Solicitude in the Decoration of their Perſons ſo viſible in all who can afford it: In the fair Sex eſpecially, who much reſemble the Turkiſh Women in this Point, and are immeaſurably fond of the moſt coſtly Ornaments of Apparel that Riches can poſſibly procure. There are other Inſtances of Reſemblance between them: Among which that of Gallantry is not the leaſt conſiderable. As they are under a greater Seclusion from general Society than the Sex is in other European Countries, where a more promiſcuous Admiſſion is allowed them every where, their Deſires of an adequate Degree of Liberty are thence the more ſtrong and urgent; and a free and open Communication being denied them, they make it their Buſineſs to ſecure themſelves a ſecret and hidden one. Hence it is that Spain is the Country of Intrigue; and that no Women exert more Ingenuity in ſuch Affairs than the Spaniſh; whoſe amorous Conſtitution, inflamed by the Severity of Reſtraint, is ever inſtigating them to thoſe Purſuits, for which it is a Pity their Eagerneſs

ſhould

ſhould not be abated by that generous Confidence in their Diſcretion, and that Freedom of their Perſons, which, to the Honour of Womankind, Experience has amply ſhewn to be the moſt effectual and powerful, as well as the moſt rational Tie of conjugal Fidelity.

The Spaniſh Women are little or nothing indebted to Education; receiving all from Nature, which has liberally ſupplied them with a Fund of Wit and Sprightlineſs, that is undoubtedly no ſmall Inducement with thoſe who have only tranſient Glimpſes of their Charms, to wiſh very earneſtly for a Removal of thoſe Impediments that obſtruct their more frequent Preſence. This not being attainable in a lawful Way of cuſtomary Intercourſe, the natural Propenſity of Men to overcome Difficulties of this Kind, incites them to leave no Expedient untried to gain Admittance to what perhaps was at firſt only the Object of their Admiration, but which, by their being refuſed an innocent Gratification of that Paſſion, becomes at laſt the Subject of a more ſerious one. Thus in Spain, as in all Countries, where the Sex is kept much out of Sight, the Thoughts of Men are continually employed in deviſing Methods to break into their Concealments.

Intrigues are not in Spain of the ſame frivolous tranſitory Nature as in France and ſome other Countries. A Spaniſh Lady who beſtows her Affections expects the ſtricteſt and completeſt Reciprocation; and as ſhe obſerves the moſt inviolate Fidelity on her Side, cannot bear the Idea of Prevarication on the Part of her Gallant; who has often much more to apprehend

from his double Dealing, than the mere Loſs of his Miſtreſs; the Spirit of a Spaniſh Woman in Love-matters being very reſentful, when her Jealouſy, which is ever on the Watch, diſcovers the Falſhood of a Lover.

NUMBERLESS Inſtances might be cited of this vindictive, unforgiving Diſpoſition; which has been carried ſometimes to ſo rancorous an Extremity, as even to procure the Death of their Rivals, as well as of their Lovers when forſaken by them.

AN atrocious Example of Revenge is recorded of one that gave an Option of the Bowl or of the Dagger to her perfidious Paramour, who was forced, by the Situation ſhe had previouſly taken Care to place him in, to accept of the former of theſe dreadful Alternatives.

THIS fatal Temper operates with no leſs Violence in the Men, whoſe Reſentment, when they are unfaithfully dealt with, often produces Scenes of the moſt tragical Nature; no Nation in Europe being more jealous, and ſuffering more from the terrible Effects of that unfortunate Paſſion.

HAPPILY however, for both Sexes, Infidelity is far from being the Characteriſtic of a Spaniard. Love in Spain is an Affair of too great Importance to be trifled with: It uſually proves the Source of much Felicity or Misfortune; and to ſucceed or to fail in it are Objects of the moſt ſerious Deſires or Apprehenſions.

THE

THE Spaniards are not Maſters of ſo much Elocution and Art in expreſſing their Paſſion, as the French, who exceed them, and indeed all Nations, in the Science of verbal Courtſhip, as much as they fall ſhort of them in the more eſſential Articles of Truth and Conſtancy, the two cardinal Virtues in a Lover, which amply atone for Want of Choice in his Words, or Gracefulneſs in his Manner.

BUT it is much leſs on complimentary and ſtudied Forms and Phraſes of Gallantry, than on Integrity and Candour, that a Spaniſh Lover founds his Hopes of Succeſs with his Countrywomen; who, in Return, pay more Regard to the Warmth and Attachment, than to the Addreſs and Eloquence of their Suitors; and had rather poſſeſs the Hearts of Men, though their chief, and perhaps only Merit be Sincerity, than receive the Homage of the moſt witty and polite, where that capital Requiſite is wanting.

FROM this Review of the Character and Diſpoſition of the Spaniards, it appears that notwithſtanding the political Degeneracy which has befallen them as a Nation, they yet retain a ſufficient Number of eminent Qualities to procure them Eſteem and Reſpect as Individuals.

THUS the Probity and Generoſity of the Spaniſh Gentlemen, and Perſons of any Figure in Life, is ſtill proverbial every where. There are indiſputably no Men in whoſe Honour and Integrity a greater Degree of Truſt and Confidence is more univerſally repoſed.

NOR

NOR are the inferior Claſſes wanting in thoſe Indications of a ſpirited Turn of Mind, that often recal to Memory the Figure they once made, and would poſſibly ſtill make, were an Adminiſtration to ariſe, earneſtly inclined and reſolved to promote the Exertion of all the national Qualifications that might be rendered of public Utility.

BUT theſe are Objects that ſeem very diſtant from the Intentions of thoſe at the Helm. Inſtead of cheriſhing ſuch Diſpoſitions as are laudable and promiſing, they rather ſtudy to ſink and depreſs the natural Magnanimity and Firmneſs of Temper in the Natives, in order to reduce them to that Standard of Obedience, or rather of Abjectneſs, which may ſilence thoſe inward Emotions of Anger and Indignation, at their Treatment, that ſo often give Birth to a more explicit and dangerous Manifeſtation of them.

THIS injurious and deſpicable End they have endeavoured to compaſs by a Behaviour full of Diſregard and Slight; as if Want of Reſpect to the Body of a People was the Method to enforce Compliance and Submiſſion.

A LATE Experiment has, however, ſhewn that Virtues inherent in Mankind by Birth, and the Force of Tradition, are not to be eradicated even by the ſuppoſed Omnipotence of arbitrary Power. The intrepid Defiance ſo invincibly bid in the very Face and Preſence of the ſupremeſt Authority, nobly evinces the Spaniards to be Men, who, though willing for the Sake

Sake of internal Peace, to ſubmit to Government, even when acting erroneouſly, are not to be wantonly inſulted by the tyrannical Capriciouſneſs of a Court.

And yet it is evident the Spirits of a Nation muſt, in Appearance, have been brought to a very low Ebb indeed, when its Oppreſſors, not ſatisfied with the real Exerciſe of unlimited Sway, could not reſt till they had made the Oppreſſed ſenſible of their own Inſignificancy, by compelling them to adopt the very Manners and external Uſages of a Country, for which they entertained the more violent a Hatred, as it was the Land of Nativity of thoſe who treated them with ſo much Contempt, and for the Sake of which, their own had ſuffered ſo many Calamities.

On the whole, it is apparent, that the great Vice of the Spaniards is Indolence, fatally too prevalent among the Generality. For this, nevertheleſs, the Government is at leaſt, if not as much more in Fault, than its Subjects; who certainly are not deficient in thoſe Endowments whereon the Glory and Proſperity of Nations are founded. But the Exertion of them depends on thoſe who are at their Head; and unhappily for Spain, its Rulers have been more guilty of neglecting its moſt eſſential Intereſts, than perhaps any other Miniſtry in Europe.

This, however, need excite no Wonder, when we conſider the Ambition of their Monarchs in former Times. Elated with the Acquiſition of a new World, and poſſeſſed of the richeſt Parts of the old, it was not

ſurpriſing

ſurpriſing both they and their Subjects forgot that the Mines of Wealth are not inexhauſtible, unleſs they are found in the Induſtry and good Management of Mankind. A Truth, it muſt be confeſſed, of which their Ignorance was the more pardonable, as it was common at that Period; but of which they obtained the Knowledge at a greater Coſt than any other People, as they became not fully convinced of it till their Strength was waſted, their Country depopulated, and the Means of retrieving themſelves almoſt entirely cut off.

After the Extinction of that Family, whoſe Princes had involved them in this ſtupendous Ruin, and brought the once greateſt People in the World, to the loweſt Degree of Abjection, when the Sceptre was transferred into the Hands of a foreign Race, it was leſs ſurpriſing ſtill, that all that commendable Nationality, which ought to warm the Hearts of Kings, ſhould be totally baniſhed from their Councils, and the only Uſe of Power converted to ſelfiſh Ends.

These are Facts which it were in vain to diſſemble, while all Europe is conſcious of them. Facts that have ſo glaringly ſtruck the Eyes of all diſcerning People in Spain, that a general Diſcontent at Meaſures evidently calculated to haſten a Ruin ſo long ago begun, and ſo near completed, has at length produced a general Deſpondency among the thinking Part of the Nation; who cannot behold, without equal Grief and Reſentment, their Affairs managed not only with the moſt abſurd and contemptible Impolicy, but, what is much

much worſe, intruſted to the Direction of Men, who, it muſt not be expected, will ever purſue other Meaſures? Men who cannot be ſuppoſed to have at Heart, the Happineſs of Spain; in a Word, of Strangers, who long have ſeemed by the whole Tenour of their Adminiſtration, to have conſidered Spain in the ſame Light that Spain itſelf views its American Poſſeſſions, as a Fund from whence to draw Reſources for the Proſecution of Schemes wherein the Intereſt of thoſe who ſupply them, is looked upon as a Thing of no Conſequence.

THOUGH it is a great Misfortune for a Country to be governed by inexperienced, unſkilful Miniſters, yet the Evil is much greater when Miniſters, however able and experienced, are Aliens; who from their Indifference in what Manner their Abilities are exerted, are always ready to proſtitute them for Ends diametrically oppoſite to the Welfare of the State they govern.

A NATIVE, however inadequate to the Taſk, ſtill acts to the beſt of his Judgment and Capacity, for the Good of a Community wherein he feels himſelf intereſted, and however ſubſervient to the Will and Deſires of his Sovereign, ſtill retains ſome Share of Attachment for his Country. But the Experience of more than half a Century has plainly demonſtrated, that not a Spark of this is felt by thoſe Adventurers, (they deſerve no better Name) who under the Protection of Royalty, have obtruded themſelves into every Department of this miſgoverned Kingdom; devoted, as it were, to the capricious Management of Men, who,

one

one would imagine by their Conduct, have thought themſelves authoriſed to make Trials of their political Skill, in the framing of Enterpriſes and Projects, which, though not bearing a Shadow of Emolument, or even of Relation to Spain, were yet to be carried into Execution at the Expence of Spaniſh Blood and Money.

Such has been the Fate of a People, who formerly would have ſpurned at the very Thought of being ruled by any but themſelves at Home; who far from receiving Laws, or ſubmitting to Influence from Abroad, aſſumed a dictatorial Arrogance in all the Courts of Europe; of a People whoſe Stateſmen and Generals preſided over ſo many States and Kingdoms, and ſubdued or over-awed ſo large a Part of the Globe.

So humiliating a Cataſtrophe affords but a melancholy Proſpect for the Vanity of thoſe Politicians who raiſe their Superſtructures on the Soil of Ambition; and who in the unfortunate Viciſſitudes that have finally awaited thoſe Nations which have ſought their Aggrandiſement by ſimilar Means, cannot but read the Tranſitorineſs of thoſe Schemes of Might and Grandeur, they ſo preſumptuouſly erect in their Imagination.

Instructed by the unvariable Teſtimony of all preceding Times, they will diſcover that ſuch Plans, however artfully laid, however vigorouſly executed, carry no Principle of Stability; that the Duration of the moſt ſucceſsful, and moſt triumphant, is ever tottering

tering and precarious; and that though the Concurrence of lucky Events may ſeem to promiſe them Laſtingneſs, they can only protract the Date of their Fall; an Event neceſſarily connected with the very Nature of theſe iniquitous Syſtems; and which, even while retarded by unexpected Caſualties, is viſibly impending in the Perception of all who are judicious enough to deduce future Effects from preſent Cauſes.

THE fluctuating, unſtable Condition of all States that are eſtabliſhed on mere Force and Violence, is a Truth unanimouſly atteſted by the Records of all Ages.

THE Perſian Empire, founded on the Conqueſts of Cyrus, never enjoyed any ſettled, permanent Repoſe; and having as unjuſtly, as imprudently, incenſed its Neighbours the Greeks, by repeated Invaſions of their Country, and Endeavours to deprive them of their Liberties, fell at laſt under the united Efforts of that warlike People.

THE prodigious Monarchy formed under Alexander, terminated with the Life of that Conqueror; and the various Realms that aroſe from its Diſſolution were nothing, from their Commencements to their laſt Periods, but Scenes of mutual Slaughter and Devaſtation.

THE Romans, who were openly determined to become univerſal Lords and Maſters, were continually expoſed to Deſtruction, and eſcaped it much more through the ill Management and Diſunion of their Enemies,

Enemies, than through their own Courage and Conduct. The Volſcians, Latins, and Samnites, often reduced them to the moſt dreadful and moſt mortifying Extremities; and the whole World knows, that if Hannibal had been properly ſeconded, Rome, in all Probability, had ſeen its latter Day.

WHAT was ſaid of our Anceſtors in Britain, might with equal Propriety be applied to all the Nations ſubdued by the Roman Arms, "*Dum ſinguli pugnant Univerſi vincuntur.*" By making a ſeparate Reſiſtance, they were all ſucceſſively overcome. This Error was the real Source of the Preſervation and good Fortune of Rome.

BUT as Ambition is a Declaration of War to all Mankind, through that unceaſing Succeſſion of Hoſtilities it naturally provokes from all Quarters, it muſt unavoidably, ſoon or late, work out its own Deſtruction.

THUS Rome periſhed at laſt, under the reiterated Incurſions and Aſſaults of thoſe Nations it had ſo long inſulted over.

THUS to argue from the Experience of our own Times, the Haughtineſs and dangerous Deſigns of Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, drew upon him the whole Weight of the North, which not only cruſhed all his Projects, but in a Manner, annihilated the Power and Importance of his Crown, for a long Series of Years.

THUS

THUS the Pride and Arrogance of Lewis the Fourteenth, by involving him in perpetual Quarrels with all his Neighbours, rouſed their Hatred and Reſentment to a Confederacy, which had it perſevered with the ſame Spirit it began, would, in all Likelihood, have effected the total Ruin of the French Monarchy.

THUS, to conclude the Subject which gave Occaſion to theſe Reflections, Spain, after having, during the Space of near two Centuries, kept Europe in continual Alarms, after having tyrannized the divers People ſubject to its Empire, plundered and maſſacred the innocent and harmleſs Inhabitants of the newly diſcovered Hemiſphere, and exerciſed all Manner of Oppreſſion wherever its Power extended, at length underwent the Fate it had for ſo many Reaſons deſerved.

FALLEN from that Height of Supremacy and Command, it ſhewed itſelf unworthy to enjoy by exerting them with ſo much Injuſtice and Barbarity, it is now reduced to that Degree of Inſignificancy (comparatively to its former Importance) as to be numbered with thoſe Empires that ſubſiſt no longer but in Hiſtorical Remembrance; and remains, in the Eye of the Univerſe, a conſpicuous Example of the Miſeries intailed on a State conducted by the Principles of Tyranny and Ambition.

End of the Firſt Volume.